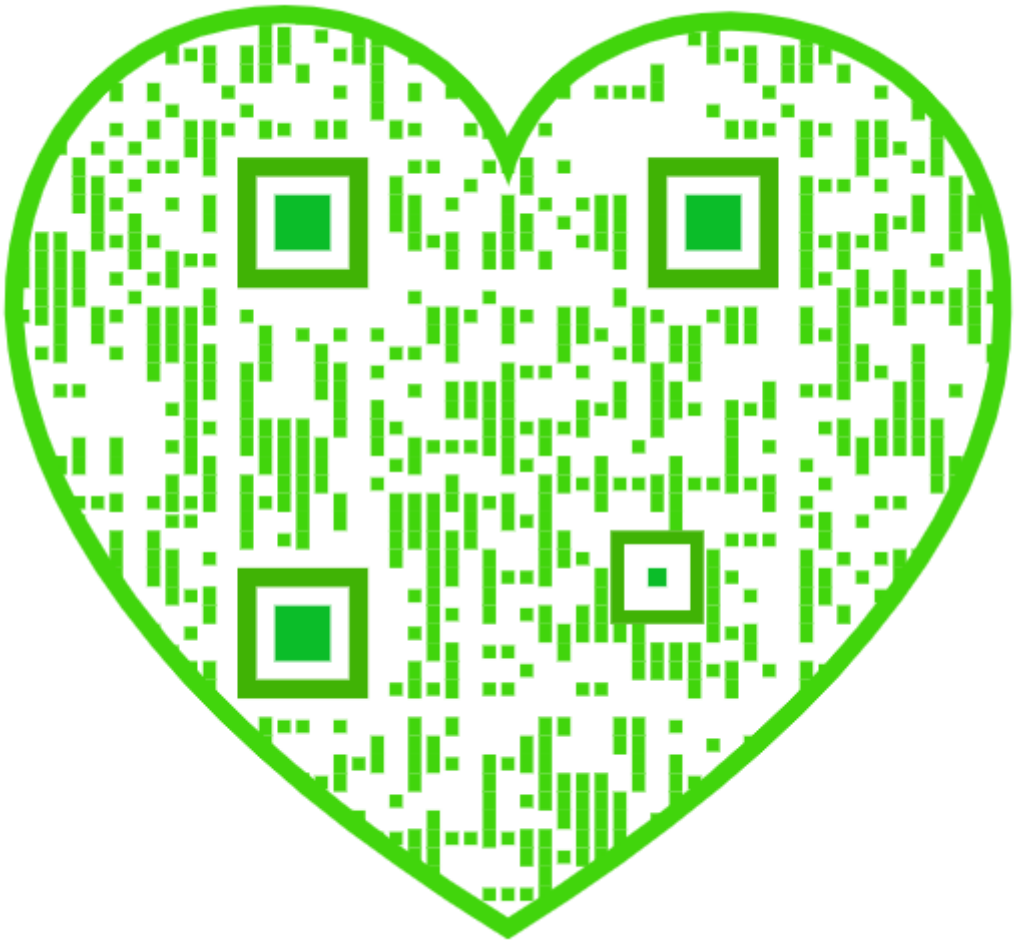
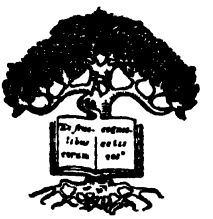


A SHORT HISTORY OF MONKS AND MONASTERIES

By ALFRED WESLEY WISHART

Sometime *Fellow* in *Church History* in *The University of Chicago*



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PREFACE

THE AIM of this volume is to sketch the history of the monastic institution from its origin to its overthrow in the Reformation period, for although the institution is by no means now extinct, its power was practically broken in the sixteenth century, and no new orders of importance or new types have arisen since that time.

A little reflection will enable one to understand the great difficulties in the execution of so broad a purpose. It was impracticable in the majority of instances to consult original sources, although intermediate authorities have been studied as widely as possible and the greatest caution has been exercised to avoid those errors which naturally arise from the use of such avenues of information. It was also deemed unadvisable to burden the work with numerous notes and citations. Such notes as were necessary to a true unfolding of the subject will be found in the appendix.

A presentation of the salient features of the

whole history was essential to a proper conception of the orderly development of the ascetic ideal. To understand the monastic institution one must not only study the isolated anchorite seeking a victory over a sinful self in the Egyptian desert or the monk in the secluded cloister, but he must also trace the fortunes of ascetic organizations, involving multitudes of men, vast aggregations of wealth, and surviving the rise and fall of empires. Almost every phase of human life is encountered in such an undertaking. Attention is divided between hermits, beggars, diplomatists, statesmen, professors, missionaries and pontiffs. It is hoped the critical or literary student will appreciate the immense difficulties of an attempt to paint so vast a scene on so small a canvas. No other claim is made upon his benevolence.

There is a process of writing history which Trench describes as "a moral whitewashing of such things as in men's sight were as blackamoors before." Religious or temperamental prejudice often obscures the vision and warps the judgment of even the most scholarly minds. Conscious of this infirmity in the ablest writers of history it

would be absurd to claim complete exemption from the power of personal bias. It is sincerely hoped, however, that the strongest passion in the preparation of this work has been that commendable predilection for truth and justice which should characterize every historical narrative, and that, whatever other shortcomings may be found herein, there is an absence of that unreasonable suspicion, not to say hatred, of everything monastic, which mars many otherwise valuable contributions to monastic history.

The author's grateful acknowledgment is made, for kindly services and critical suggestions, to ERI BAKER HULBERT, D.D., LL.D., Dean of the Divinity School, and Professor and Head of the Department of Church History; FRANKLIN JOHNSON, D.D., LL.D., Professor of Church History and Homiletics; BENJAMIN S. TERRY, Ph.D., Professor of Medieval and English History; and RALPH C. H. CATTERALL, Instructor in Modern History; all of The University of Chicago. Also to JAMES M. WHITON, Ph.D., of the Editorial Staff of "The Outlook"; EPHRAIM EMERTON, Ph.D., Winn Professor of Ecclesiastical History in

Harvard University; S. GIFFARD NELSON, L.H.D., of Brooklyn, New York; A. H. NEWMAN, D.D., LL.D., Professor of Church History in McMaster University of Toronto, Ontario; and PAUL VAN DYKE, D.D., Professor of History in Princeton University.

A. W. W.

TRENTON, March, 1900.

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SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI, DYING, IS CONVEYED TO THE CHURCH OF SAINTE MARIE DE PORTIUNCULE, . *facing title.*

After the painting by J. J. Weerts. Originally published by Goupil & Co. of Paris, and here reproduced by their permission.

[Jean Joseph Weerts was born at Roubaix (Nord), on May 1, 1847. He was a pupil of Cabanel, Mils and Pils. He was awarded the second-class medal in 1875, was made Chevalier of the Legion of Honor in 1884, received the silver medal at the Universal Exposition of 1889, and was created an Officer of the Legion of Honor in 1897. He is a member of the "Société des Artistes Français," and is *hors concours*.]

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After an engraving by Ambroise Tardieu, from a painting on glass in the Convent of the R. P. Minimes, at Rheims.

[Ambroise Tardieu was born in Paris, in 1790, and died in 1837. He was an engraver of portraits, landscapes and architecture, and a clever manipulator of the burin. For a time he held the position of "Geographical Engraver" to the Departments of Marine, Fortifications and Forests. He was a member of the French Geographical and Mathematical Societies.]—*Nagler*.

SAINT DOMINIC, ... 230

From a photograph of Bozzani's painting, preserved in his cell at Santa Sabina, Rome. Here reproduced from Augusta T. Drane's

"History of St. Dominic," by courtesy of the author and the publishers, Longmans, Green & Co., of London and New York.

["Although several so-called portraits (of St. Dominic) are preserved, yet none of them can be regarded as the *vera effigies* of the saint, though that preserved at Santa Sabina probably presents us with a kind of traditionary likeness."]—*History of St. Dominic.*

[In the "History of St. Dominic," on page 226, the author credits the portrait shown to "Bozzani." We are unable to find any record of a painter by that name. Nagler, however, tells of a painter of portraits and historical subjects, Carlo Bozzoni by name, who was born in 1607 and died in 1657. He was a son of Luciano Bozzoni, a Genoese painter and engraver. He is said to have done good work, but no other mention is made of him.]

IGNATIUS DE LOYOLA, ... 261

After the engraving by Greatbach, "from a scarce print by H. Wierz." Originally published by Richard Bentley, London, in 1842.

[W. Greatbach was a London engraver in the first half of the nineteenth century. He worked chiefly for the "calendars" and "annuals" of his time, and did notable work for the general book trade of the better class.]

[A search of the authorities does not reveal an engraver named "H. Wierz." This is probably intended for Hieronymus Wierex (or Wierix, according to Bryant), a famous engraver, born in 1552, and who is credited by Nagler, in his "Künstler-Lexikon," with having produced "a beautiful and rare plate" of "St. Ignaz von Loyola." The error, if such it be, is easily explained by the fact that portrait engravers seldom cut the lettering of a plate themselves, but have it engraved by others, who have a special aptitude for making shapely letters.]

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Many other authorities were consulted by the author, but only those works that are easily accessible and likely to prove of direct value to the student are cited above.

MONKS AND MONASTERIES

I

MONASTICISM IN THE EAST

THE MONK is a type of religious character by no means peculiar to Christianity. Every great religion in ancient and modern times has expressed itself in some form of monastic life.

The origin of the institution is lost in antiquity. Its genesis and gradual progress through the centuries are like the movement of a mighty river springing from obscure sources, but gathering volume by the contributions of a multitude of springs, brooks, and lesser rivers, entering the main stream at various stages in its progress. While the mysterious source of the monastic stream may not be found, it is easy to discover many different

influences and causes that tended to keep the mighty current flowing majestically on. It is not so easy to determine which of these forces was the greatest.

"Monasticism," says Schaff, "proceeds from religious seriousness, enthusiasm and ambition; from a sense of the vanity of the world, and an inclination of noble souls toward solitude, contemplation, and freedom from the bonds of the flesh and the temptations of the world." A strong ascetic tendency in human nature, particularly active in the Orient, undoubtedly explains in a general way the origin and growth of the institution. Various forms of philosophy and religious belief fostered this monastic inclination from time to time by imparting fresh impetus to the desire for soul-purity or by deepening the sense of disgust with the world.

India is thought by some to have been the birthplace of the institution. In the sacred writings of the venerable Hindûs, portions of which have been dated as far back as 2400 B. C., there are numerous legends about holy monks and many ascetic rules. Although based on opposite philosophical

principles, the earlier Brahminism and the later system, Buddhism, each tended toward ascetic practices, and they each boast to-day of long lines of monks and nuns.

The Hindoo (Brahmin) ascetic, or naked philosopher, as the Greeks called him, exhausted his imagination in devising schemes of self-torture. He buried himself with his nose just above the ground, or wore an iron collar, or suspended weights from his body. He clenched his fists until the nails grew into his palms, or kept his head turned in one direction until he was unable to turn it back. He was a miracle-worker, an oracle of wisdom, and an honored saint. He was bold, spiritually proud, capable of almost superhuman endurance. We will meet him again in the person of his Christian descendant on the banks of the Nile.

The Buddhist ascetic was, perhaps, less severe with himself, but the general spirit and form of the institution was, and is, the same as among the Brahmins. In each religion we observe the same selfish individualism,—a desire to save one's own soul by slavish obedience to ascetic rules,—the

extinction of natural desires by self-punishment. "A Brahmin who wishes to become an ascetic," says Clarke, "must abandon his home and family, and go live in the forest. His food must be roots and fruit, his clothing a bark garment or a skin, he must bathe morning and evening, and suffer his hair to grow."

The fact to be remembered, however, is that in India, centuries before the Christian Era, there existed both phases of Christian monasticism, the hermit* and the crowded convent.

Dhaquit, a Chaldean ascetic, who is said to have lived about 2000 B. C., is reported to have earnestly rebuked those who tried to preserve the body from decay by artificial resources. "Not by natural means," he said, "can man preserve his body from corruption and dissolution after death, but only through good deeds, religious exercises and offering of sacrifices,—by invoking the gods by their great and beautiful names, by prayers during the night, and fasts during the day."

When Father Bury, a Portuguese missionary, first saw the Chinese bonzes, tonsured and using

*Appendix, Note A.

their rosaries, he cried out, "There is not a single article of dress, or a sacerdotal function, or a single ceremony of the Romish church, which the Devil has not imitated in this country." I have not the courage to follow this streamlet back into the devil's heart. The attempt would be too daring. Who invented shaved heads and monkish gowns and habits, we cannot tell, but this we know: long before Father Bury saw and described those things in China, there existed in India the Grand Lama or head monk, with monasteries under him, filled with monks who kept the three vows of chastity, poverty and obedience. They had their routine of prayers, of fasts and of labors, like the Christian monks of the middle ages.

Among the Greeks there were many philosophers who taught ascetic principles. Pythagoras, born about 580 B. C., established a religious brotherhood in which he sought to realize a high ideal of friendship. His whole plan singularly suggests monasticism. His rules provided for a rigid self-examination and unquestioning submission to a master. Many authorities claim that the influence of the Pythagorean philosophy was

strongly felt in Egypt and Palestine, after the time of Christ. "Certain it is that more than two thousand years before Ignatius Loyola assembled the nucleus of his great society in his subterranean chapel in the city of Paris, there was founded at Crotona, in Greece, an order of monks whose principles, constitution, aims, method and final end entitle them to be called 'The Pagan Jesuits.'" *

The teachings of Plato, no doubt, had a powerful monastic influence, under certain social conditions, upon later thinkers and upon those who yearned for victory over the flesh. Plato strongly insisted on an ideal life in which higher pleasures are preferred to lower. Earthly thoughts and ambitions are to yield before a holy communion with the Divine. Some of his views "might seem like broken visions of the future, when we think of the first disciples who had all things in common, and, in later days, of the celibate clergy, and the cloisteral life of the religious orders." The effect of such a philosophy in times of general corruption upon those who wished to acquire exceptional moral

*Appendix, Note B.

and intellectual power, and who felt unable to cope with the temptations of social life, may be easily imagined. It meant, in many cases, a retreat from the world to a life of meditation and soul-conflict. In later times it exercised a marked influence upon ascetic literature.

Coming closer to Christianity in time and in teaching, we find a Jewish sect, called Essenes, living in the region of the Dead Sea, which bore remarkable resemblances to Christian monasticism. The origin and development of this band, which numbered four thousand about the time of Christ, are unknown. Even the derivation of the name is in doubt, there being at least twenty proposed explanations. The sect is described by Philo, an Alexandrian-Jewish philosopher, who was born about 25 B. C., and by Josephus, the Jewish historian, who was born at Jerusalem A. D. 37. These writers evidently took pains to secure the facts, and from their accounts, upon which modern discussions of the subject are largely based, the following facts are gleaned.

The Essenes were a sect outside the Jewish ecclesiastical body, bound by strict vows and pro-

fessing an extraordinary purity. While there were no vows of extreme penance, they avoided cities as centers of immorality, and, with some exceptions, eschewed marriage. They held aloof from traffic, oaths, slave-holding, and weapons of offence. They were strict Sabbath observers, wore a uniform robe, possessed all things in common, engaged in manual labor, abstained from forbidden food, and probably rejected the bloody sacrifices of the Temple, although continuing to send their thank-offerings. Novitiates were kept on probation three years. The strictest discipline was maintained, excommunication following detection in heinous sins. Evidently the standard of character was pure and lofty, since their emphasis on self-mastery did not end in absurd extravagances. Their frugal food, simple habits, and love of cleanliness, combined with a regard for ethical principles, conduced to a high type of life. Edersheim remarks, "We can scarcely wonder that such Jews as Josephus and Philo, and such heathens as Pliny, were attracted by such an unworldly and lofty sect."

Some writers maintain that they were also wor-

shipers of the sun, and hence that their origin is to be traced to Persian sources. Even if so, they seemed to have escaped that confused and mystical philosophy which has robbed Oriental thought of much power in the realm of practical life. Philo says, "Of philosophy, the dialectical department, as being in no wise necessary for the acquisition of virtue, they abandon to the word-catchers; and the part which treats of the nature of things, as being beyond human nature, they leave to speculative air-gazers, with the exception of that part of it which deals with the subsistance of God and the genesis of all things; but the ethical they right well work out."

Pliny the elder, who lived A. D. 23–79, made the following reference to the Essenes, which is especially interesting because of the tone of sadness and weariness with the world suggested in its praise of this Jewish sect. "On the western shore (of the Dead Sea) but distant from the sea far enough to escape from its noxious breezes, dwelt the Essenes. They are an eremite clan, one marvelous beyond all others in the whole world; without any women, with sexual intercourse entirely given up,

without money, and the associates of palm trees. Daily is the throng of those that crowd about them renewed, men resorting to them in numbers, driven through weariness of existence, and the surges of ill-fortune, to their manner of life. Thus it is that through thousands of ages—incredible to relate!—their society, in which no one is born, lives on perennial. So fruitful to them is the irksomeness of life experienced by other men."

Admission to the order was granted only to adults, yet children were sometimes adopted for training in the principles of the sect. Some believed in marriage as a means of perpetuating the order.

Since it would not throw light on our present inquiry, the mooted question as to the connection of Essenism and the teachings of Jesus may be passed by. The differences are as great as the resemblances and the weight of opinion is against any vital relation.

The character of this sect conclusively shows that some of the elements of Christian monasticism existed in the time of Jesus, not only in Palestine but in other countries. In an account of the

Therapeutæ, or true devotees, an ascetic body similar to the Essenes, Philo says, "There are many parts of the world in which this class may be found. . . . They are, however, in greatest abundance in Egypt."

During Apostolic times various teachings and practices were current that may be characterized as ascetic. The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Colossians, doubtless had in mind a sect or school which despised the body and abstained from meats and wine. A false asceticism, gathering inspiration from pagan philosophy, was rapidly spreading among Christians even at that early day. The teachings of the Gnostics, a speculative sect of many schools, became prominent in the closing days of the Apostolic age or very soon thereafter. Many of these schools claimed a place in the church, and professed a higher life and knowledge than ordinary Christians possessed. The Gnostics believed in the complete subjugation of the body by austere treatment.

The Montanists, so called after Montanus, their famous leader, arose in Asia Minor during the second century, when Marcus Aurelius was em-

peror. Schaff describes the movement as "a morbid exaggeration of Christian ideas and demands." It was a powerful and frantic protest against the growing laxity of the church. It despised ornamental dress and prescribed numerous fasts and severities.

These facts and many others that might be mentioned throw light on our inquiry in several ways. They show that asceticism was in the air. The literature, philosophy and religion of the day drifted toward an ascetic scheme of life and stimulated the tendency to acquire holiness, even at the cost of innocent joys and natural gratifications. They show that worldliness was advancing in the church, which called for rebuke and a return to Apostolic Christianity; that the church was failing to satisfy the highest cravings of the soul. True, it was well-nigh impossible for the church, in the midst of such a powerful and corrupt heathen environment, to keep itself up to its standards.

It is a common tradition that in the first three centuries the practices and spirit of the church were comparatively pure and elevated. Harnack says, "This tradition is false. The church was

already secularized to a great extent in the middle of the third century." She was "no longer in a position to give peace to all sorts and conditions of men." It was then that the great exodus of Christians from the villages and cities to mountains and deserts began. Although from the time of Christ on there were always some who understood Christianity to demand complete separation from all earthly pleasures, yet it was three hundred years and more before large numbers began to adopt a hermit's life as the only method of attaining salvation. "They fled not only from the world, but from the world within the church. Nevertheless, they did not flee out of the church."

We can now see why no definite cause for the monastic institution can be given and no date assigned for its origin. It did not commence at any fixed time and definite place. Various philosophies and religious customs traveled for centuries from country to country, resulting in singular resemblances and differences between different ascetic or monastic sects. Christian monasticism was slowly evolved, and gradually assumed definite organization

as a product of a curious medley of Heathen-Jewish-Christian influences.

A few words should be said here concerning the influence of the Bible upon monasticism. Naturally the Christian hermits and early fathers appealed to the Bible in support of their teachings and practices. It is not necessary, at this point, to discuss the correctness of their interpretations. The simple fact is that many passages of scripture were considered as commands to attain perfection by extraordinary sacrifices, and certain Biblical characters were reverenced as shining monastic models. In the light of the difficulties of Biblical criticism it is easy to forgive them if they were mistaken, a question to be discussed farther on. They read of those Jewish prophets described in Hebrews: "They went about in sheepskins, in goatskins; . . . wandering in deserts and mountains and caves, and the holes of the earth." They pointed to Elijah and his school of prophets; to John the Baptist, with his raiment of camel's hair and a leathern girdle about his loins, whose meat was locusts and wild honey. They recalled the commandment of Jesus to the rich

young man to sell all his possessions and give to the poor. They quoted the words, "Take no thought for the morrow what ye shall eat and what ye shall drink or wherewithal ye shall be clothed." They construed following Christ to mean in His own words, "forsaking father, mother, brethren, wife, children, houses and lands." They pointed triumphantly to the Master himself, unmarried and poor, who had not "where to lay his head." They appealed to Paul's doctrine of marriage. They remembered that the Church at Jerusalem was composed of those who sold their possessions and had all things in common. Whatever these and numerous other passages may truly mean, they interpreted them in favor of a monastic mode of life; they understood them to teach isolation, fastings, severities, and other forms of rigorous self-denial. Accepting Scripture in this sense, they trampled upon human affection and gave away their property, that they might please God and save their souls.

Between the time of Christ and Paul of Thebes, who died in the first half of the fourth century, and who is usually recognized as the founder of monasticism, many Christian disciples voluntarily abandoned

their wealth, renounced marriage and adopted an ascetic mode of life, while still living in or near the villages or cities. As the corruption of society and the despair of men became more widespread, these anxious Christians wandered farther and farther away from fixed habitations until, in an excess of spiritual fervor, they found themselves in the caves of the mountains, desolate and dreary, where no sound of human voice broke in upon the silence. The companions of wild beasts, they lived in rapt contemplation on the eternal mysteries of this most strange world.

My task now is to describe some of those recluses who still live in the biographies of the saints and the traditions of the church. Ducis, while reading of these hermits, wrote to a friend as follows: "I am now reading the lives of the Fathers of the Desert. I am dwelling with St. Pachomius, the founder of the monastery at Tabenna. Truly there is a charm in transporting one's self to that land of the angels—one could not wish ever to come out of it." Whether the reader will call these strange characters angels, and will wish he could have shared their beds of stone and midnight vigils, I will not

venture to say, but at all events his visit will be made as pleasant as possible.

In writing the life of Mahomet, Carlyle said, "As there is no danger of our becoming, any of us, Mahometans, I mean to say all the good of Mahomet I justly can." So, without distorting the picture that has come down to us, I mean to say all the good of these Egyptian hermits that the facts will justify.

The Hermits of Egypt

Egypt was the mother of Christian monasticism, as she has been of many other wonders.

Vast solitudes; lonely mountains, honey-combed with dens and caves; arid valleys and barren hills; dreary deserts that glistened under the blinding glare of the sun that poured its heat upon them steadily all the year; strange, grotesque rocks and peaks that assumed all sorts of fantastic shapes to the overwrought fancy; in many places no water, no verdure, and scarcely a thing in motion; the crocodile and the bird lazily seeking their necessary food and stirring only as compelled; unbounded expanse

in the wide star-lit heavens; unbroken quiet on the lonely mountains—a fit home for the hermit, a paradise to the lover of solitude and peace.

Of life under such conditions Kingsley has said: "They enjoyed nature, not so much for her beauty as for her perfect peace. Day by day the rocks remained the same. Silently out of the Eastern desert, day by day, the rising sun threw aloft those arrows of light which the old Greeks had named 'the rosy fingers of the dawn.' Silently he passed in full blaze above their heads throughout the day, and silently he dipped behind the Western desert in a glory of crimson and orange, green and purple. . . . Day after day, night after night, that gorgeous pageant passed over the poor hermit's head without a sound, and though sun, moon and planet might change their places as the years rolled round, the earth beneath his feet seemed not to change." As for the companionless men, who gazed for years upon this glorious scene, they too were of unusual character. Waddington finely says: "The serious enthusiasm of the natives of Egypt and Asia, that combination of indolence and energy, of the calmest languor with the fiercest passions,

. . . disposed them to embrace with eagerness the tranquil but exciting duties of religious seclusion." Yes, here are the angels of Ducis in real flesh and blood. They revel in the wildest eccentricities with none to molest or make afraid, always excepting the black demons from the spiritual world. One dwells in a cave in the bowels of the earth; one lies on the sand beneath a blazing sun; one has shut himself forever from the sight of man in a miserable hut among the bleak rocks of yonder projecting peak; one rests with joy in the marshes, breathing with gratitude the pestilential vapors.

Some of these saints became famous for piety and miraculous power. Athanasius, fleeing from persecution, visited them, and Jerome sought them out to learn from their own lips the stories of their lives. To these men and to others we are indebted for much of our knowledge concerning this chapter of man's history. Less than fifty years after Paul of Thebes died, or about 375 A. D., Jerome wrote the story of his life, which Schaff justly characterizes as "a pious romance." From Jerome we gather the following account: Paul was the real founder of the hermit life, although not the first to bear the name.

During the Decian persecution, when churches were laid waste and Christians were slain with barbarous cruelty, Paul and his sister were bereaved of both their parents. He was then a lad of sixteen, an inheritor of wealth and skilled for one of his years in Greek and Egyptian learning. He was of a gentle and loving disposition. On account of his riches he was denounced as a Christian by an envious brother-in-law and compelled to flee to the mountains in order to save his life. He took up his abode in a cave shaded by a palm that afforded him food and clothing. "And that no one may deem this impossible," affirms Jerome, "I call to witness Jesus and his holy angels that I have seen and still see in that part of the desert which lies between Syria and the Saracens' country, monks of whom one was shut up for thirty years and lived on barley bread and muddy water, while another in an old cistern kept himself alive on five dried figs a day."

It is impossible to determine how much of the story which follows is historically true. Undoubtedly, it contains little worthy of belief, but it gives us some faint idea of how these hermits lived. Its chief value consists in the fact that it preserves a

fragment of the monastic literature of the times—a story which was once accepted as a credible narrative. Imagine the influence of such a tale, when believed to be true, upon a mind inclined to embrace the doctrines of asceticism. Its power at that time is not to be measured by its reliability now. Jerome himself declares in the prologue that many incredible things were related of Paul which he will not repeat. After reading the following story, the reader may well inquire what more fanciful tale could be produced even by a writer of fiction.)

(The blessed Paul was now one hundred and thirteen years old, and Anthony, who dwelt in another place of solitude, was at the age of ninety. In the stillness of the night it was revealed to Anthony that deeper in the desert there was a better man than he, and that he ought to see him. So, at the break of day, the venerable old man, supporting and guiding his weak limbs with a staff, started out, whither he knew not. At scorching noontide he beholds a fellow-creature, half man, half horse, called by the poets Hippo-centaur. After gnashing outlandish utterances, this monster, in words broken, rather than spoken, through his brist-

ling lips, points out the way with his right hand and swiftly vanishes from the hermit's sight. Anthony, amazed, proceeds thoughtfully on his way when a mannikin, with hooked snout, horned forehead and goat's feet, stands before him and offers him food. Anthony asks who he is. The beast thus replies: "I am a mortal being, and one of those inhabitants of the desert, whom the Gentiles deluded by various forms of error worship, under the name of Fauns and Satyrs." As he utters these and other words, tears stream down the aged traveler's face! He rejoices over the glory of God and the destruction of Satan. Striking the ground with his staff, he exclaims, "Woe to thee, Alexandria, who, instead of God, worshipest monsters! Woe to thee, harlot city, into which have flowed together the demons of the world! What will you say now? Beasts speak of Christ, and you, instead of God, worship monsters." "Let none scruple to believe this incident," says the chronicler, "for a man of this kind was brought alive to Alexandria and the people saw him; when he died his body was preserved in salt and brought to Antioch that the Emperor might view him."

Anthony continues to traverse the wild region into which he had entered. There is no trace of human beings. The darkness of the second night wears away in prayer. At day-break he beholds far away a she-wolf gasping with parched thirst and creeping into a cave. He draws near and peers within. All is dark, but perfect love casteth out fear. With halting step and bated breath, he enters. After a while a light gleams in the distant midnight darkness. With eagerness he presses forward, but his foot strikes against a stone and arouses the echoes; whereupon the blessed Paul closes the door and makes it fast. For hours Anthony lay at the door craving admission. "I know I am not worthy," he humbly cries, "yet unless I see you I will not turn away. You welcome beasts, why not a man? If I fail, I will die here on your threshold."

> "Such was his constant cry; unmoved he stood,
> To whom the hero thus brief answer made."

"Prayers like these do not mean threats, there is no trickery in tears." So, with smiles, Paul gives him entrance and the two aged hermits fall into each

other's embrace. Together they converse of things human and divine, Paul, close to the dust of the grave, asks, Are new houses springing up in ancient cities? What government directs the world? Little did this recluse know of his fellow-beings and how fared it with the children of men who dwelt in those great cities around the blue Mediterranean. He was dead to the world and knew it no more.

A raven brought the aged brothers bread to eat and the hours glided swiftly away. Anthony returned to get a cloak which Athanasius had given him in which to wrap the body of Paul. So eager was he to behold again his newly-found friend that he set out without even a morsel of bread, thirsting to see him. But when yet three days' journey from the cave he saw Paul on high among the angels. Weeping, he trudged on his way. On entering the cave he saw the lifeless body kneeling, with head erect and hands uplifted. He tenderly wrapped the body in the cloak and began to lament that he had no implements to dig a grave. But Providence sent two lions from the recesses of the mountain that came rushing with flying manes. Roaring, as if they too mourned, they pawed the earth and thus

the grave was dug. Anthony, bending his aged shoulders beneath the burden of the saint's body, laid it lovingly in the grave and departed.

Jerome closes this account by challenging those who do not know the extent of their possessions,—who adorn their homes with marble and who string house to house,—to say what this old man in his nakedness ever lacked. "Your drinking vessels are of precious stones; he satisfied his thirst with the hollow of his hand. Your tunics are wrought of gold; he had not the raiment of your meanest slave. But on the other hand, poor as he was, Paradise is open to him; you, with all your gold, will be received into Gehenna. He, though naked, yet kept the robe of Christ; you, clad in your silks, have lost the vesture of Christ. Paul lies covered with worthless dust, but will rise again to glory; over you are raised costly tombs, but both you and your wealth are doomed to burning. I beseech you, reader, whoever you may be, to remember Jerome the sinner. He, if God would give him his choice, would sooner take Paul's tunics with his merits, than the purple of kings with their punishment."

Such was the story circulated among rich and

poor, appealing with wondrous force to the hearts of men in those wretched years.

What was the effect upon the mind of the thoughtful? If he believed such teaching, weary of the wickedness of the age, and moved by his noblest sentiments, he sold his tunics wrought of gold and fled from his palaces of marble to the desert solitudes.

But the monastic story that most strongly impressed the age now under consideration, was the biography of Anthony, "the patriarch of monks" and virtual founder of Christian monasticism. It was said to have been written by Athanasius, the famous defender of orthodoxy and Archbishop of Alexandria; yet some authorities reject his authorship. It exerted a power over the minds of men beyond all human estimate. It scattered the seeds of asceticism wherever it was read. Traces of its influence are found all over the Roman empire, in Egypt, Asia Minor, Palestine, Italy and Gaul. Knowing the character of Athanasius, we may rest assured that he sincerely believed all he really recorded (it is much interpolated) of the strange life of Anthony, and, true or false, thousands of

others believed in him and in his story. Augustine, the great theologian of immortal fame, acknowledged that this book was one of the influences that led to his conversion, and Jerome, whose life I will review later, was mightily swayed by it.

Anthony was born about 251 A. D., in Upper Egypt, of wealthy and noble parentage. He was a pious child, an obedient son, and a lover of solitude and books. His parents died when he was about twenty years old, leaving to his care their home and his little sister. One day, as he entered the church, meditating on the poverty of Christ, a theme much reflected upon in those days, he heard these words read from the pulpit, "If thou wouldst be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come, follow me." As if the call came straight from heaven to his own soul, he left the church at once and made over his farm to the people of the village. He sold his personal possessions for a large sum, and distributed the proceeds among the poor, reserving a little for his sister. Still he was unsatisfied. Entering the church on another occasion, he heard our Lord saying in the gospel, "Take no thought for the morrow." The clouds

cleared away. His anxious search for truth and duty was at an end. He went out and gave away the remnant of his belongings. Placing his sister in a convent, the existence of which is to be noted, he fled to the desert. Then follows a striking statement, "For monasteries were not common in Egypt, nor had any monk at all known the great desert; but every one who wished to devote himself to his own spiritual welfare performed his exercise alone, not far from the village."

Laboring with his hands, recalling texts of Scripture, praying whole sleepless nights, fasting for several days at a time, visiting his fellow saints, fighting demons, so passed the long years away. He slept on a small rush mat, more often on the bare ground. Forgetting past austerities, he was ever on the search for some new torture and pressing forward to new and strange experiences. He changed his habitation from time to time. Now he lived in a tomb, in company with the silent dead; then for twenty years in a deserted castle, full of reptiles, never going out and rarely seeing any one. From each saint he learned some fresh mode of spiritual training, observing his practice for future imitation

and studying the charms of his Christian character that he might reproduce them in his own life; thus he would return richly laden to his cell.

But in all these struggles Anthony had one foe—the arch-enemy of all good. He suggests impure thoughts, but the saint repels them by prayer; he incites to passion, but the hero resists the fiend with fastings and faith. Once the dragon, foiled in his attempt to overcome Anthony, gnashed his teeth, and coming out of his body, lay at his feet in the shape of a little black boy. But the hermit was not beguiled into carelessness by this victory. He resolved to chastise himself more severely. So he retired to the tombs of the dead. One dark night a crowd of demons flogged the saint until he fell to the ground speechless with torture. Some friends found him the next day, and thinking that he was dead, carried him to the village, where his kinsfolk gathered to mourn over his remains. But at midnight he came to himself, and, seeing but one acquaintance awake, he begged that he would carry him back to the tombs, which was done. Unable to move, he prayed prostrate and sang, "If an host be laid against me, yet shall not my heart be afraid."

The enraged devils made at him again. There was a terrible crash; through the walls the fiends came in shapes like beasts and reptiles. In a moment the place was filled with lions roaring at him, bulls thrusting at him with their horns, creeping serpents unable to reach him, wolves held back in the act of springing. There, too, were bears and asps and scorpions. Mid the frightful clamor of roars, growls and hisses, rose the clear voice of the saint, as he triumphantly mocked the demons in their rage. Suddenly the awful tumult ceased; the wretched beings became invisible and a ray of light pierced the roof to cheer the prostrate hero. His pains ceased. A voice came to him saying, "Thou hast withstood and not yielded. I will always be thy helper, and will make thy name famous everywhere." Hearing this he rose up and prayed, and was stronger in body than ever before.

This is but one of numerous stories chronicling Anthony's struggles with the devil. Like conflicts were going on at that hour in many another cave in those great and silent mountains.

There are also wondrous tales of his miraculous power. He often predicted the coming of sufferers

and healed them when they came. His fame for curing diseases and casting out devils became so extensive that Egypt marveled at his gifts, and saints came even from Rome to see his face and to hear his words. His freedom from pride and arrogance was as marked as his fame was great. He yielded joyful obedience to presbyters and bishops. His countenance was so full of divine grace and heavenly beauty as to render him easily distinguishable in a crowd of monks. Letters poured in upon him from every part of the empire. Kings wrote for his advice, but it neither amazed him nor filled his heart with pride. "Wonder not," said he, "if a king writes to us, for he is but a man, but wonder rather that God has written His law to man and spoken to us by His Son." At his command princes laid aside their crowns, judges their magisterial robes, while criminals forsook their lives of crime and embraced with joy the life of the desert.

Once, at the earnest entreaty of some magistrates, he came down from the mountain that they might see him. Urged to prolong his stay he refused, saying, "Fishes, if they lie long on the dry land,

die; so monks who stay with you lose their strength. As the fishes, then, hasten to the sea, so must we to the mountains."

At last the shadows lengthened and waning strength proclaimed that his departure was nigh. Bidding farewell to his monks, he retired to an inner mountain and laid himself down to die. His countenance brightened as if he saw his friends coming to see him, and thus his soul was gathered to his fathers. He is said to have been mourned by fifteen thousand disciples.

This is the story which moved a dying empire. "Anthony," says Athanasius, "became known not by wordly wisdom, nor by any art, but solely by piety, and that this was the gift of God who can deny?" The purpose of such a life was, so his biographer thought, to light up the moral path for men, that they might imbibe a zeal for virtue.

The "Life of St. Anthony" is even more remarkable for its omissions than for its incredible tales. While I reserve a more detailed criticism of its Christian ideals until a subsequent chapter, it may be well to quote here a few words from Isaac Taylor. After pointing out some of its defects he

continu[illegible] not a word of justification by faith; not a word of the gracious influence of the Spirit in renewing and cleansing the heart; not a word responding to any of those signal passages of Scripture which make the Gospel 'Glad Tidings' to guilty men." This I must confess to be true, even though I may and do heartily esteem the saint's enthusiasm for righteousness.

So far I have described chiefly the spiritual experiences of these men, but the details of their physical life are hardly less interesting. There was a holy rivalry among them to excel in self-torture. Their imaginations were constantly employed in devising unique tests of holiness and courage. They lived in holes in the ground or in dried up wells; they slept in thorn bushes or passed days and weeks without sleep; they courted the company of the wildest beasts and exposed their naked bodies to the broiling sun. Macarius became angry because an insect bit him and in penitence flung himself into a marsh where he lived for weeks. He was so badly stung by gnats and flies that his friends hardly knew him. Hilarion, at twenty years of age, was more like a spectre than a living man.

His cell was only five feet high, a little lower than his stature. Some carried weights equal to eighty or one hundred and fifty pounds suspended from their bodies. Others slept standing against the rocks. For three years, as it is recorded, one of them never reclined. In their zeal to obey the Scriptures, they overlooked the fact that cleanliness is akin to godliness. It was their boast that they never washed. One saint would not even use water to drink, but quenched his thirst with the dew that fell on the grass. St. Abraham never washed his face for fifty years. His biographer, not in the least disturbed by the disagreeable suggestions of this circumstance, proudly says, "His face reflected the purity of his soul." If so, one is moved to think that the inward light must indeed have been powerfully piercing, if it could brighten a countenance unwashed for half a century. There is a story about Abbot Theodosius who prayed for water that his monks might drink. In response to his petition a stream burst from the rocks, but the foolish monks, overcome by a pitiful weakness for cleanliness, persuaded the abbot to erect a bath, when lo, the stream dried. Supplications and repentance availed nothing.

After a year had passed, the monks, promising never again to insult Heaven by wishing for a bath, were granted a second Mosaic miracle.

Thus, unwashed, clothed in rags, their hair uncut, their faces unshaven, they lived for years. No wonder that to their disordered fancy the desert was filled with devils, the animals spake and Heaven sent angels to minister unto them.

The Pillar Saint

But the strangest of all strange narratives yet remains. We turn from Egypt to Asia Minor to make the acquaintance of that saint whom Tennyson has immortalized,—the idol of monarchs and the pride of the East,—Saint Simeon Stylites. Stories grow rank around him like the luxuriant products of a tropical soil. How shall I briefly tell of this man, whom Theodoret, in his zeal, declares all who obey the Roman rule know—the man who may be compared with Moses the Legislator, David the King and Micah the Prophet? He lived between the years 390 and 459 A. D. He was a shepherd's son, but at an early age entered a monastery. Here

he soon distinguished himself by his excessive austerities. One day he went to the well, removed the rope from the bucket and bound it tightly around his body underneath his clothes. A few weeks later, the abbot, being angry with him because of his extreme self-torture, bade his companions strip him. What was his astonishment to find the rope from the well sunk deeply into his flesh. "Whence," he cried, "has this man come to us, wanting to destroy the rule of this monastery? I pray thee depart hence."

With great trouble they unwound the rope and the flesh with it, and taking care of him until he was well, they sent him forth to commence a life of austerities that was to render him famous. He adopted various styles of existence, but his miracles and piety attracted such crowds that he determined to invent a mode of life which would deliver him from the pressing multitudes. It is curious that he did not hide himself altogether if he really wished to escape notoriety; but, no, he would still be within the gaze of admiring throngs. His holy and fanciful genius hit upon a scheme that gave him his peculiar name. He took up his abode on the top

on a column which was at first about twelve feet high, but was gradually elevated until it measured sixty-four feet. Hence, he is called Simeon Stylites, or Simeon the Pillar Saint.

On this lofty column, betwixt earth and heaven, the hermit braved the heat and cold of thirty years. At its base, from morning to night, prayed the admiring worshipers. Kings kneeled in crowds of peasants to do him homage and ask his blessing. Theodoret says, "The Ishmaelites, coming by tribes of two hundred and three hundred at a time, and sometimes even a thousand, deny, with shouts, the error of their fathers, and breaking in pieces before that great illuminator, the images which they had worshiped, and renouncing the orgies of Venus, they received the Divine sacrament." Rude barbarians confessed their sins in tears. Persians, Greeks, Romans and Saracens, forgetting their mutual hatred, united in praise and prayer at the feet of this strange character.

Once a week the hero partook of food. Many times a day he bowed his head to his feet; one man counted twelve hundred and forty-four times and then stopped in sheer weariness from gazing at the

miracle of endurance aloft. Again, from the setting of the sun to its appearance in the East, he would stand unsoothed by sleep with his arms outstretched like a cross.

If genius can understand such a life as that and fancy the thoughts of such a soul, Tennyson seems not only to have comprehended the consciousness of the Pillar Saint, but also to have succeeded in giving expression to his insight. He has laid bare the soul of Simeon in its commingling of spiritual pride with affected humility, and of a consciousness of meritorious sacrifice with a sense of sin. The Saint spurns notoriety and the homage of men, yet exults in his control over the multitudes.

The poet thus imagines Simeon to speak as the Saint is praying God to take away his sin:

> "But yet
> Bethink thee, Lord, while thou and all the saints
> Enjoy themselves in heaven, and men on earth
> House in the shade of comfortable roofs,
> Sit with their wives by fires, eat wholesome food,
> And wear warm clothes, and even beasts have stalls,
> I, 'tween the spring and downfall of the light,
> Bow down one thousand and two hundred times,
> To Christ, the Virgin Mother, and the Saints;
> Or in the night, after a little sleep,

I wake: the chill stars sparkle; I am wet
With drenching dews, or stiff with crackling frost.
I wear an undress'd goatskin on my back;
A grazing iron collar grinds my neck;
And in my weak, lean arms I lift the cross,
And strive and wrestle with thee till I die:
O mercy, mercy! wash away my sin.
O Lord, thou knowest what a man I am;
A sinful man, conceived and born in sin:
'Tis their own doing; this is none of mine;
Lay it not to me. Am I to blame for this,
That here come those that worship me? Ha! ha!
They think that I am somewhat. What am I?
The silly people take me for a saint,
And bring me offerings of fruit and flowers:
And I, in truth (thou wilt bear witness here)
Have all in all endured as much, and more
Than many just and holy men, whose names
Are register'd and calendar'd for saints.
Good people, you do ill to kneel to me.
What is it I can have done to merit this?

. . . . . .

Yet do not rise; for you may look on me,
And in your looking you may kneel to God.
Speak! is there any of you halt or maim'd?
I think you know I have some power with Heaven
From my long penance: let him speak his wish.
Yes, I can heal him. Power goes forth from me.
They say that they are heal'd. Ah, hark! they shout
'St. Simeon Stylites.' Why, if so,
God reaps a harvest in me. O my soul,
God reaps a harvest in thee. If this be,
Can I work miracles and not be saved?"

Once, the devil, in shape like an angel, riding in a chariot of fire, came to carry Simeon to the skies. He whispered to the weary Saint, "Simeon, hear my words, which the Lord hath commanded thee. He has sent me, his angel, that I may carry thee away as I carried Elijah." Simeon was deceived, and lifted his foot to step out into the chariot, when the angel vanished, and in punishment for his presumption an ulcer appeared upon his thigh.

But time plays havoc with saints as well as sinners, and death slays the strongest. Bowed in prayer, his weary heart ceased to beat and the eyes that gazed aloft were closed forever. Anthony, his beloved disciple, ascending the column, found that his master was no more. Yet, it seemed as if Simeon was loath to leave the spot, for his spirit appeared to his weeping follower and said, "I will not leave this column, and this blessed mountain. For I have gone to rest, as the Lord willed, but do thou not cease to minister in this place and the Lord will repay thee in heaven."

His body was carried down the mountain to Antioch. Heading the solemn procession were the patriarch, six bishops, twenty-one counts and six

thousand soldiers, "and Antioch," says Gibbon, "revered his bones as her glorious ornament and impregnable defence."

The Cenobites of the East

We cannot linger with these hermits. I pass now to the cenobitic* life. We go back in years and return to Egypt. Man is a social animal, and the social instinct is so strong that even hermits are swayed by its power and get tired of living apart from one another. When Anthony died the deserts were studded with hermitages, and those of exceptional fame were surrounded by little clusters of huts and dens. Into these cells crowded the hermits who wished to be near their master

Thus, step by step, organized or cenobitic monasticism easily and naturally came into existence. The anchorites crawled from their dens every day to hear the words of their chief saint,—a practice giving rise to stated meetings, with rules for worship. Regulations as to meals, occupations, dress, penances, and prayers naturally follow.

*Appendix, Note C.

The author of the first monastic rules is said to have been Pachomius, who was born in Egypt about the year 292 A. D. He was brought up in paganism but was converted in early life while in the army. On his discharge he retired with a hermit to Tabenna, an island in the Nile. It is said he never ate a full meal after his conversion, and for fifteen years slept sitting on a stone. Natural gifts fitted him to become a leader, and it was not long before he was surrounded by a congregation of monks for whom he made his rules.

The monks of Pachomius were divided into bands of tens and hundreds, each tenth man being an under officer in turn subject to the hundredth, and all subject to the superior or abbot of the mother house. They lived three in a cell, and a congregation of cells constituted a laura or monastery. There was a common room for meals and worship. Each monk wore a close fitting tunic and a white goat-skin upper garment which was never laid aside at meals or in bed, but only at the Eucharist. Their food usually consisted of bread and water, but occasionally they enjoyed such luxuries as oil, salt, fruits and vegetables. They ate in silence, which

was sometimes broken by the solemn voice of a reader.

"No man," says Jerome, "dares look at his neighbor or clear his throat. Silent tears roll down their cheeks, but not a sob escapes their lips." Their labors consisted of some light handiwork or tilling the fields. They grafted trees, made bee-hives, twisted fish-lines, wove baskets and copied manuscripts. It was early apparent that as man could not live alone so he could not live without labor. We shall see this principle emphasized more clearly by Benedict, but it is well to notice that at this remote day provision was made for secular employments. Jerome enjoins Rusticus, a young monk, always to have some work on hand that the devil may find him busy. "Hoe your ground," says he, "set out cabbages; convey water to them in conduits, that you may see with your own eyes the lovely vision of the poet,—

> "Art draws fresh water from the hilltop near,
> Till the stream, flashing down among the rocks,
> Cools the parched meadows and allays their thirst."

There were individual cases of excessive self-

torture even among these congregations of monks, but we may say that ordinarily, organized monasticism was altogether less severe upon the individual than anchoretic life. The fact that the monk was seeking human fellowship is evidence that he was becoming more humane, and this softening of his spirit betrayed itself in his treatment of himself. The aspect of life became a little brighter and happier.

Four objects were comprehended in these monastic rules,—solitude, manual labor, fasting and prayer. We need not pity these dwellers far from walled cities and the marts of trade. Indeed, they claim no sympathy. Religious ideals can make strange transformations in man's disposition and tastes. They loved their hard lives.

The hermit Abraham said to John Cassian, "We know that in these, our regions, there are some secret and pleasant places, where fruits are abundant and the beauty and fertility of the gardens would supply our necessities with the slightest toil. We prefer the wilderness of this desolation before all that is fair and attractive, admitting no comparison between the luxuriance of the most exuber-

ant soil and the bitterness of these sands." Jerome himself exclaimed, "Others may think what they like and follow each his own bent. But to me a town is a prison and solitude paradise."

The three vows of chastity, poverty and obedience were adopted and became the foundation stones of the monastic institution, to be found in every monastic order. There is a typical illustration in Kingsley's Hypatia of what they meant by obedience. Philammon, a young monk, was consigned to the care of Cyril, the Bishop of Alexandria, and a factious, cruel man, with an imperious will. The bishop received and read his letter of introduction and thus addressed its bearer, "Philammon, a Greek. You are said to have learned to obey. If so, you have also learned to rule. Your father-abbot has transferred you to my tutelage. You are now to obey me." "And I will," was the quick response. "Well said. Go to that window and leap forth into the court." Philammon walked to it and opened it. The pavement was fully twenty feet below, but his business was to obey and not to take measurements. There was a flower in a vase upon the sill. He quietly removed it, and in an instant would have

leaped for life or death, when Cyril's voice thundered, "Stop!"

The Pachomian monks despised possessions of every kind. The following pathetic incident shows the frightful extent to which they carried this principle, and also illustrates the character of that submission to which the novitiate voluntarily assented: Cassian described how Mutius sold his possessions and with his little child of eight asked admission to a monastery. The monks received but disciplined him. "He had already forgotten that he was rich, he must forget that he was a father." His child was taken, clothed in rags, beaten and spurned. Obedience compelled the father to look upon his child wasting with pain and grief, but such was his love for Christ, says the narrator, that his heart was rigid and immovable. He was then told to throw the boy into the river, but was stopped in the act of obeying.

Yet men, women, and even children, coveted this life of unnatural deprivations. "Posterity," says Gibbon, "might repeat the saying which had formerly been applied to the sacred animals of the same country, that in Egypt it was less difficult to

find a god than a man." Though the hermit did not claim to be a god, yet there were more monks in many monasteries than inhabitants in the neighboring villages. Pachomius had fourteen hundred monks in hi own monastery and seven thousand under his rule. Jerome says fifty thousand monks were sometimes assembled at Easter in the deserts of Nitria. It was not uncommon for an abbot to command five thousand monks. St. Serapion boasted of ten thousand. Altogether, so we are told, there were in the fifth century more than one hundred thousand persons in the monasteries, three-fourths of whom were men.

The rule of Pachomius spread over Egypt into Syria and Palestine. It was carried by Athanasius into Italy and Gaul. It existed in various modified forms until it was supplanted by the Benedictine rule.

Leaving Egypt, again we cross the Mediterranean into Asia Minor. Near the Black Sea, in a wild forest abounding in savage rocks and gloomy ravines, there dwelt a young man of twenty-six. He had traveled in Egypt, Syria and Palestine. He had visited the hermits of the desert and studied

philosophy and eloquence in cultured Athens. In virtue eminent, in learning profound, this poetic soul sought to realize its ideal in a lonely and cherished retreat—in a solitude of Pontus.

The young monk is the illustrious saint and genius,—Basil the Great,—the Bishop of Cæsarea, and the virtual founder of the monastic institution in the Greek church. The forest and glens around his hut belonged to him, and on the other bank of the river Iris his mother and sister were leading similar lives, having abandoned earthly honors in pursuit of heaven. Hard crusts of bread appeased his hunger. No fires, except those which burned within his soul, protected him from the wintry blast. His years were few but well spent. After a while his powerful intellect asserted itself and he was led into a clearer view of the true spiritual life. His practical mind revolted against the gross ignorance and meaningless asceticism of Egypt. He determined to form an order that would conform to the inner meaning of the Bible and to a more sensible conception of the religious life. For his time he was a wise legislator, a cunning workman and a daring thinker. The modification of his ascetic

ideal was attended by painful struggles. Many an hour he spent with his bosom friend, Gregory of Nazianza, discussing the subject. The middle course which they finally adopted is thus neatly described by Gregory:

> "Long was the inward strife, till ended thus:
> I saw, when men lived in the fretful world,
> They vantaged other men, but missed the while
> The calmness, and the pureness of their hearts.
> They who retired held an uprighter post,
> And raised their eyes with quiet strength toward heaven;
> Yet served self only, unfraternally.
> And so, 'twixt these and those, I struck my path,
> To meditate with the free solitary,
> Yet to live secular, and serve mankind."

Monks in large numbers flocked to this mountain retreat of Basil's. These he banded together in an organization, the remains of which still live in the Greek church. So great is the influence of his life and teachings, "that it is common though erroneous to call all Oriental monks Basilians." His rules are drawn up in the form of answers to two hundred and three questions. He added to the three monastic vows a fourth, which many authorities claim now

appeared for the first time,—namely, that of irrevocable vows—once a monk, always a monk.

Basil did not condemn marriage, but he believed that it was incompatible with the highest spiritual attainments. For the Kingdom of God's sake it was necessary to forsake all. "Love not the world, neither the things of the world," embraced to his mind the married state. By avoiding the cares of marriage a man was sure to escape, so he thought, the gross sensuality of the age. He struck at the dangers which attend the possession of riches, by enforcing poverty. An abbot was appointed over his cloisters to whom absolute obedience was demanded. Everywhere men needed this lesson of obedience. The discipline of the armies was relaxed. The authority of religion was set at naught; laxity and disorder prevailed even among the monks. They went roaming over the country controlled only by their whims. Insubordination had to be checked or the monastic institution was doomed. Hence, Basil was particular to enforce a respect for law and order.

Altogether this was an honest and serious attempt

to introduce fresh power into a corrupt age and to faithfully observe the Biblical commands as Basil understood them. The floods of iniquity were engulfing even the church. A new standard had to be raised and an inner circle of pious and zealous believers gathered from the multitude of half-pagan Christians, or all was lost.

The subsequent history of Greek monachism has little interest. In Russia, at a late date, the Greek monks served some purpose in keeping alive the national spirit under the Tartar yoke, but the practical benefits to the East were few, in comparison with the vigorous life of the Western monasticism.

Montalembert, the brilliant champion of Christian monasticism, becomes an adverse critic of the system in the East, although it is noteworthy he now speaks of monasticism as it appears in the Greek church, which he holds to be heretical; yet his indictment is quite true: "They yielded to all the deleterious impulses of that declining society. They have saved nothing, regenerated nothing, elevated nothing."

We have visited the hermit in the desert and in

the monastery governed by its abbot and its rules. We must view the monk in one other aspect, that of theological champion. Here the hermit and the monk of the monastery meet on common ground. They were fighters, not debaters; fighters, not disciplined soldiers; fighters, not persuading Christians. They swarmed down from the mountains like hungry wolves. They fought heretics, they fought bishops, they fought Roman authorities, they fought soldiers, and fought one another. Ignorant, fanatical and cruel, they incited riots, disturbed the public peace and shed the blood of foes.

Theological discord was made a thousand times more bitter by their participation in the controversies of the time. Furious monks became the armed champions of Cyril, the Bishop of Alexandria. They insulted the prefect, drove out the Jews and, to the everlasting disgrace of the monks, Cyril and the church, they dragged the lovely Hypatia from her lecture hall and slew her with all the cruelty satanic ingenuity could devise. Against a background of black and angry sky she stands forth, as a soul through whose reason God made himself manifest. Her unblemished character, her learning

and her grace forever cry aloud against an orthodoxy bereft alike of reason and of the spirit of the Nazarene.

The fighting monks crowded councils and forced decisions. They deposed hostile bishops or kept their favorites in power by murder and violence. Two black-cowled armies met in Constantinople, and amid curses fought with sticks and stones a battle of creeds. Cries of "Holy! Holy! Holy!" mingled with, "It's the day of martyrdom! Down with the tyrant!" The whole East was kept in a feverish state. The Imperial soldiers confessed their justifiable fears when they said, "We would rather fight with barbarians than with these monks."

No wonder our perplexity increases and it seems impossible to determine what these men really did for the cause of truth. We have been unable to distinguish the hermit from the beasts of the fields. We hear his groans, see his tears, and watch him struggle with demons. We are disgusted with his filth, amused at his fancies, grieved at his superstition. We pity his agony and admire his courage. We watch the progress of order and rule out of chaos. We see monasteries grow up around damp

caves and dismal huts. We behold Simeon praying among the birds of heaven, and look into the face of the young and handsome Basil, in whom the monastic institution of the East reaches the zenith of its power.

I am free to confess a profound reverence for many of these men determined at all hazards to keep their souls unspotted from the world. I bow before a passion for righteousness ready to part with life itself if necessary. Yet the gross extravagances, the almost incredible absurdities of their unnatural lives compel us to withhold our judgment.

One thing is certain, the strange life of those far-off years is an eloquent testimony to the indestructible craving of the human soul for self-mastery and soul-purity.

II

MONASTICISM IN THE WEST: ANTE-BENEDICTINE MONKS 340–480 *A. D.*

WE ARE NOW to follow the fortunes of the monastic system from its introduction in Rome to the time of Benedict of Nursia, the founder of the first great monastic order.

Constantine the Great, the first Christian emperor, who made Christianity the predominant religion in the Roman Empire, died in 337 A. D. Three years later Rome heard, probably for the first time, an authentic account of the Egyptian hermits. The story was carried to the Eternal City by Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, one of the most remarkable characters in the early church, a man of surpassing courage and perseverance, an intrepid foe of heresy, "heroic and invincible," as Milton styled him. Twenty of the

forty-six years of his official life were spent in banishment.

Athanasius was an intimate friend of the hermit Anthony and a persistent advocate of the ascetic ideal. When he fled to Rome, in 340, to escape the persecutions of the Arians, he took with him two specimens of monastic virtue—Ammonius and Isidore. These hermits, so filthy and savage in appearance, albeit, as I trust, clean in heart, excited general disgust, and their story of the tortures and holiness of their Egyptian brethren was received with derision. But men who had faced and conquered the terrors of the desert were not to be so easily repulsed. Aided by other ascetic travelers from the East they persisted in their propaganda until contempt yielded to admiration. The enthusiasm of the uncouth hermits became contagious. The Christians in Rome now welcomed the story of the recluses as a Divine call to abandon a dissolute society for the peace and joy of a desert life.

But before this transformation of public opinion can be appreciated, it is needful to know something of the social and religious condition of Rome in

the days when Athanasius and his hermits walked her streets.

After suffering frightful persecutions for three centuries, the Church had at last nominally conquered the Roman Empire; nominally, because although Christianity was to live, the Empire had to die. "No medicine could have prevented the diseased old body from dying. The time had come. When the wretched inebriate embraces a spiritual religion with one foot in the grave, with a constitution completely undermined, and the seeds of death planted, then no repentance or lofty aspiration can prevent physical death. It was so in Rome." The death-throes were long and lingering, as befits the end of a mighty giant, but death was certain. There are many facts which explain the inability of a conquering faith to save a tottering empire, but it is impracticable for us to enter upon that wide field. Some help may be gained from that which follows.

Of morals, Rome was destitute. She possessed the material remains and superficial acquirements of a proud civilization, such as great public highways, marble palaces, public baths, temples and libraries.

Elegance of manners and acquisitions of wealth indicate specious outward refinement. But these things are not sufficient to guarantee the permanence of institutions or the moral welfare of a nation. In the souls of men there was a fatal degeneracy. There was outward prosperity but inward corruption.

Professor Samuel Dill, in his highly instructive work on "Roman Society in the Last Century of the Western Empire," points out the fact that Rome's fall was due to economic and political causes as well as to the deterioration of her morals. A close study of these causes, however, will reveal the presence of moral influences. Professor Dill says: "The general tendency of modern inquiry has to discover in the fall of that august and magnificent organization, not a cataclysm, precipitated by the impact of barbarous forces, but a process slowly prepared and evolved by internal and economic causes." Two of these causes were the dying out of municipal liberty and self-government, and the separation of the upper class from the masses by sharp distributions of wealth and privilege. It is indeed true that these causes contributed to Rome's ruin;

that the central government was weak; that the civil service was oppressive and corrupt; that the aristocratic class was selfish; and that the small landed proprietors were steadily growing poorer and fewer, while, on the contrary, the upper or senatorial class was increasing in wealth and power. But after due emphasis has been accorded to these destructive factors, it yet remains true that the want of public spirit and the prevailing cultivated selfishness may be traced to a decline of faith in those religious ideals that serve to stimulate the moral life and thus preserve the national integrity.

Society was divided into three classes. It is computed that one-half the population were slaves. A large majority of the remainder were paupers, living on public charity, and constituting a festering sore that threatened the life of the social organism. The rich, who were relatively few, squandered princely incomes in a single night, and exhausted their imaginations devising new and expensive forms of sensuous pleasure. The profligacy of the nobles almost surpasses credibility, so that trustworthy descriptions read like works of fiction. Farrar says: "A whole population might be trembling lest they

should be starved by the delay of an Alexandrian corn ship, while the upper classes were squandering a fortune at a single banquet, drinking out of myrrhine and jeweled vases worth hundreds of pounds, and feasting on the brains of peacocks and the tongues of nightingales." The frivolity of the social and political leaders of Rome, the insane thirst for lust and luxury, the absence of seriousness in the face of frightful, impending ruin, almost justify the epigram of Silvianus, "Rome was laughing when she died."

"On that hard pagan world disgust
And secret loathing fell;
Deep weariness and sated lust
Made human life a hell.
In his cool hall, with haggard eyes,
The Roman noble lay;
He drove abroad in furious guise
Along the Appian Way;
He made a feast, drank fierce and fast,
And crowned his hair with flowers—
No easier nor no quicker past
The impracticable hours."

Pagan mythology and Pagan philosophy were powerless to resist this downward tendency. Although Christianity had become the state religion,

it was itself in great danger of yielding to the decay that prevailed. The Empire was, in fact, but nominally Christian. Thousands of ecclesiastical adherents were half pagan in their spirit and practice. Harnack declares, "They were too deeply affected by Christianity to abandon it, but too little to be Christians. Pure religious enthusiasm waned, ideals received a new form, and the dependence and responsibility of individuals became weaker." Even ordinary courage had everywhere declined and the pleasures of the senses controlled the heart of Christian society.

Many of the men who should have resisted this gross secularization of the church, who ought to have set their faces against the departure from apostolic ideals by exalting the standards of the earlier Christianity; these men, the clergy of the Christian church, had deserted their post of duty and surrendered to the prevailing worldliness.

Jerome describes, with justifiable sarcasm, these moral weaklings, charged with the solemn responsibility of preaching a pure gospel to a dying empire. "Such men think of nothing but their dress; they use perfumes freely, and see that there

are no creases in their leather shoes. Their curling hair shows traces of the tongs; their fingers glisten with rings; they walk on tiptoe across a damp road, not to splash their feet. When you see men acting that way, think of them rather as bridegrooms than as clergymen. If he sees a pillow that takes his fancy, or an elegant table-cover, or, indeed, any article of furniture, he praises it, looks admiringly at it, takes it into his hand, and, complaining that he has nothing of the kind, begs or rather extorts it from its owner." Such trifling folly was fatal. The times demanded men of vigorous spirit, who dared to face the general decline, and cry out in strong tones against it. The age needed moral warriors, with the old Roman courage and love of sacrifice; martyrs willing to rot in prison or shed their blood in the street, not effeminate men, toying with fancy table-covers and tiptoeing across a sprinkled road. "And as a background," says Kingsley, "to all this seething heap of corruption, misrule and misery, hung the black cloud of the barbarians, the Teutonic tribes from whom we derive our best blood, ever coming nearer and nearer, waxing stronger and stronger, to be soon the con-

querors of the Cæsars and the masters of the world."

But there were many pure and sincere Christians—a saving remnant. The joyous alacrity with which men and women responded to the monastic call, and entered upon careers of self-torture for the sake of deliverance from moral corruption, shows that the spirit of true faith was not extinct. These seekers after righteousness may be described as "a dismal and fanatical set of men, overlooking the practical aims of life," but it is a fair question to ask, "if they had not abandoned the world to its fate would they not have shared that fate?" "The glory of that age," says Professor Dill, "is the number of those who were capable of such self-surrender; and an age should be judged by its ideals, not by the mediocrity of conventional religion masking worldly self-indulgence. This we have always with us; the other we have not always."

Yet the sad fact remains that the transforming power of Christianity was practically helpless before the surging floods of vice and superstition. The noble struggles of a few saints were as straws in a hurricane. The church had all she could do to save herself.

"When Christianity itself was in such need of reform," says Lord, "when Christians could scarcely be distinguished from pagans in love of display, and in egotistical ends, how could it reform the world? When it was a pageant, a ritualism, an arm of the state, a vain philosophy, a superstition, a formula, how could it save, if ever so dominant? The corruptions of the church in the fourth century are as well authenticated as the purity and moral elevation of Christians in the second century." Even in the early days of Christianity the ruin of Rome was impending, but, at that time, the adherents of the Christian religion were few and poor. They did not possess enough power and influence to save the state. When monasticism came to Rome, the lords of the church were getting ready to sit upon the thrones of princes, but the dazzling victory of the church was not a spiritual conquest of sin, so the last ray of hope for the Empire was extinguished. Her fall was inevitable.

With this outlined picture in mind, fancy Athanasius and his monks at Rome. These men despise luxury and contemn riches. They have come to make Rome ring with the old war cries,—although

they wrestled not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual wickedness in high places. Terror and despair are on every side, but they are not afraid. They know what it means to face the demons of the desert, to lie down at night with wild beasts for companions. They have not yielded to the depravity of the human heart and the temptations of a licentious age. They have conquered sinful appetites by self-abnegation and fasting. They come to a distracted society with a message of peace—a peace won by courageous self-sacrifice. They call men to save their perishing souls by surrendering their wills to God and enlisting in a campaign against the powers of darkness. They appeal to the ancient spirit of courage and love of hardship. They arouse the dormant moral energies of the profligate nobles, proud of the past and sick of the present. The story of Anthony admonished Rome that a life of sensuous gratification was inglorious, unworthy of the true Roman, and that the flesh could be mastered by heroic endeavor.

Women, who spent their hours in frivolous amusements, welcomed with gratitude the discovery that they could be happy without degradation, and

joyfully responded to the call of righteousness. "Despising themselves," says Kingsley, "despising their husbands to whom they had been wedded in loveless wedlock, they too fled from a world which had sated and sickened them."

Woman's natural craving for lofty friendships and pure aspirations found satisfaction in the monastic ideal. She fled from the incessant broils of a corrupt court, from the courtesans that usurped the place of the wife, from the insolence and selfishness of men who scorned even the appearance of virtue and did not hesitate to degrade even their wives and sisters. She would disprove the biting sarcasm of Juvenal,—

> "Women, in judgment weak, in feeling strong,
> By every gust of passion borne along.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> A woman stops at nothing, when she wears
> Rich emeralds round her neck, and in her ears
> Pearls of enormous size; these justify
> Her faults, and make all lawful in her eye."

Therefore did the women hear with tremulous eagerness the story of the saintly inhabitants of the desert, and flinging away their trinkets, they hastened to the solitude of the cell, there to mourn

their folly and seek pardon and peace at the feet of the Most High.

Likewise, the men, born to nobler tasks than fawning upon princes and squandering life and fortune in gluttony and debauchery, blushed for shame, and abandoned forever the company of sensualists and parasites. Potitianus, a young officer of rank, read the life of Anthony, and cried to his fellow-soldier: "Tell me, I pray thee, whither all our labors tend? What do we seek? For whom do we carry arms? What can be our greatest hope in the palace but to be friends to the Emperor? And how frail is that fortune! What perils! When shall this be?" Inspired by the monastic story he exchanged the friendship of the Emperor for the friendship of God, and the military life lost all its attractiveness.

A philosopher and teacher hears the same narrative, and his countenance becomes grave; he seizes the arm of Alypius, his friend, and earnestly asks: "What, then, are we doing? How is this? What hast thou been hearing? These ignorant men rise; they take Heaven by force, and we, with our heartless sciences, behold us wallowing in the flesh and

in our blood! Is it shameful to follow them, and are we not rather disgraced by not following them?" So, disgusted with his self-seeking career, his round of empty pleasures, he, too, is moved by this higher call to abandon his wickedness and devote his genius to the cause of righteousness.

Ambrose, Paulinus, Chrysostom, Basil, Gregory, and many others, holding important official posts or candidates for the highest honors, abandoned all their chances of political preferment in order to preach the gospel of ascetic Christianity.

Yes, for good or evil, Rome is profoundly stirred. The pale monk, in all his filth and poverty, is the master of the best hearts in the capital. Every one in whom aspiration is still alive, who longs for some new light, and all who vaguely grope after a higher life, hear his voice and become pliant to his will.

"Great historic movements," says Grimke, "are born not in whirlwinds, in earthquakes, and pomps of human splendor and power, but in the agonies and enthusiasms of grand, heroic spirits." Monastic history, like secular, centers in the biographies of such great men as Anthony, Basil, Jerome, Benedict, Francis, Dominic and Loyola. To understand the

character of the powerful forces set in motion by the coming of the monks to Rome, it is necessary to know the leading spirits whose preëminent abilities and lofty personalities made Western monasticism what it was.

The time is about 418 A. D.; the place, a monastery in Bethlehem, near the cave of the Nativity. In a lonely cell, within these monastic walls, we shall find the man we seek. He is so old and feeble that he has to be raised in his bed by means of a cord affixed to the ceiling. He spends his time chiefly in reciting prayers. His voice, once clear and resonant, sinks now to a whisper. His failing vision no longer follows the classic pages of Virgil or dwells fondly on the Hebrew of the Old Testament. This is Saint Jerome, the champion of asceticism, the biographer of hermits, the lion of Christian polemics, the translator of the Bible, and the worthy, brilliant, determined foe of a dissolute society and a worldly church. Although he spent thirty-four years of his life in Palestine, I shall consider Jerome in connection with the monasticism of the West, for it was in Rome that he exercised his greatest influence. His translation of the Scriptures

is the Vulgate of the Roman church, and his name is enrolled in the calendar of her saints. "He is," observes Schaff, "the connecting link between the Eastern and Western learning and religion."

By charming speech and eloquent tongue Jerome won over the men, but principally the women, of Rome to the monastic life. So powerful was his message when addressed to the feminine heart, that mothers are said to have locked their daughters in their rooms lest they should fall under the influence of his magnetic voice. It was largely owing to his own labors that he could write in after years: "Formerly, according to the testimony of the apostles, there were few rich, few noble, few powerful among the Christians. Now, it is no longer so. Not only among the Christians, but among the monks are to be found a multitude of the wise, the noble and the rich."

Near to the very year that Athanasius came to Rome, or about 340 A. D., Jerome was born at Stridon, in Dalmatia, in what is now called the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. His parents were modestly wealthy and were slaveholders. His student days were spent in Rome, where he divided

his time between the study of books and the revels of the streets. One day some young Christians induced him to visit the catacombs with them. Here, before the graves of Christian martyrs, a quiet and holy influence stole into his heart, that finally led to his conversion and baptism. Embracing the monastic ideal, he gathered around him a few congenial friends, who joined him in a covenant of rigid abstinence and ascetic discipline. Then followed a year of travel with these companions, through Asia Minor, ending disastrously at Antioch. One of his friends returned home, two of them died, and he himself became so sick with fever that his life was despaired of. Undismayed by these evils, brought on by excessive austerities, he determined to retire to a life of solitude.

About fifty miles southeast from Antioch was a barren waste of nature but a paradise for monks—the Desert of Chalcis. On its western border were several monasteries. All about for miles, the dreary solitudes were peopled with shaggy hermits. They saw visions and dreamed dreams in caves infested by serpents and wild beasts. They lay upon the sands, scorched in summer by the blazing sun, and

chilled in winter by the winds that blew from snow-capped mountains. For five years, Jerome dwelt among these demon-fighting recluses. Clad in sackcloth stained by penitential tears, he toiled for his daily bread, and struggled against visions of Roman dancing girls. He was a most industrious reader of books and a great lover of debate. Monks from far and near visited him, and together they discussed questions of theology and philosophy.

But we may not follow this varied and eventful life in all its details. After a year or two spent at Constantinople, and three years at Rome, he returned to the East, visiting the hermits of Egypt on his way, and finally settled at Bethlehem. His fame soon drew around him a great company of monks. These he organized into monasteries. He built a hospital, and established an inn for travelers. Lacking the necessary funds to carry out his projects, he dispatched his brother to the West with instructions to sell what was left of his property, and the proceeds of this sale he devoted to the cause. While in Bethlehem he wrote defences of orthodoxy, eulogies of the dead, lives of saints and commentaries on the Bible. He also completed his

translation of the Scriptures, and wrote numerous letters to persons dwelling in various parts of the empire.

Jerome rendered great service to monasticism by his literary labors. He invested the dullest of lives with a halo of glory; under the magic touch of his rhetoric the wilderness became a gladsome place and the desert blossomed as the rose. His glowing language transfigured the pale face and sunken eyes of the starved hermit into features positively beautiful, while the rags that hung loosely upon his emaciated frame became garments of lustrous white. "Oh, that I could behold the desert," he cries, "lovelier than any city! Oh, that I could see those lonely spots made into a paradise by the saints that throng them!" Without detracting from the bitterness of the prospect, he glorifies the courage that can face the horrors of the desert, and the heart that can rejoice midst the solitude of the seas. Hear him describe the home of Bonosus, a hermit on an isle in the Adriatic:

"Bonosus, your friend, is now climbing the ladder foreshown in Jacob's dream. He is bearing his cross, neither taking thought for the morrow, nor

looking back at what he has left. Here you have a youth, educated with us in the refining accomplishments of the world, with abundance of wealth and in rank inferior to none of his associates; yet he forsakes his mother, his sister, and his dearly loved brother, and settles like a new tiller of Eden on a dangerous island, with the sea roaring round its reefs, while its rough crags, bare rocks and desolate aspect make it more terrible still. . . . He sees the glory of God which even the apostles saw not, save in the desert. He beholds, it is true, no embattled towns, but he has enrolled his name in the new city. Garments of sackcloth disfigure his limbs, yet so he will the sooner be caught up to meet Christ in the clouds. Round the entire island roars the frenzied sea, while the beetling crags along its winding shores resound as the billows beat against them. Precipitous cliffs surround his dreadful abode as if it were a prisor. He is careless, fearless, armed from head to foot in the apostles' armor."

Listen to these trumpet tones as Jerome calls to a companion of his youth in Rome: "O des-

ert, enamelled with the flowers of Christ! O retreat, which rejoicest in the friendship of God! What dost thou in the world, my brother, with thy soul greater than the world? How long wilt thou remain in the shadow of roofs, and in the smoky dungeons of cities? Believe me, I see here more light."

To pass hastily over such appeals, coming from distant lands across the sea to stir the minds of the thoughtful in Rome, is to ignore one of the causes which produced the great exodus that followed. He made men see that they were living in a moral Sodom, and that if they would save their souls they must escape to the desert. The power of personal influence, of inspiring private letters, can hardly be overemphasized in studying the remarkable progress of asceticism. Great awakenings in the moral, as in the political or the social world, may be traced to the profound influence of individuals, whose prophetic insight and moral enthusiasm unfold the germ of the larger movements. There may be widespread unrest, the ground may be prepared for the seed, but the immediate cause of universal uprisings is the

clarion call of genius. Thus Luther's was the voice that cried in the wilderness, inciting a vast host for whom centuries had been preparing.

But Jerome's fame as a man of learning, possessing a critical taste and a classic style of rare beauty and simplicity, must not blind us to the crowning glory of his brilliant career. He was above all a spiritual force. His chief appeal was to the conscience. He warmed the most torpid hearts by the fervor of his love, and encouraged the most hopeless by his fiery zeal and heroic faith. As a promoter of monasticism, he clashed with the interests of an enfeebled clergy and a corrupt laity. Nothing could swerve him from his course. False monks might draw terrible rebukes from him, but the conviction that the soul could be delivered from captivity to the body only by mortification remained unshaken. He induced men to break the fetters of society that they might, under the more favorable circumstances of solitude, wage war against their unruly passions.

When parents objected to his monastic views, Jerome quoted the saying of Jesus respecting the

renunciation of father and mother, and then said: "Though thy mother with flowing hair and rent garments, should show thee the breasts which have nourished thee; though thy father should lie upon the threshold; yet depart thou, treading over thy father, and fly with dry eyes to the standard of the cross. The love of God and the fear of hell easily rend the bonds of the household asunder. The Holy Scripture indeed enjoins obedience, but he who loves them more than Christ loses his soul."

Jerome vividly portrays his own spiritual conflicts. The deserts were crowded with saintly soldiers battling against similar temptations, the nature of which is suggested by the following excerpt from Jerome's writings: "How often," he says, "when I was living in the desert, in the vast solitude which gives to hermits a savage dwelling-place, parched by a burning sun, how often did I fancy myself among the pleasures of Rome! I used to sit alone because I was filled with bitterness. Sackcloth disfigured my unshapely limbs and my skin from long neglect had become black as an Ethiopian's. Tears and groans were every day my portion; and if drowsiness chanced to overcome

my struggles against it, my bare bones, which hardly held together, clashed against the ground. Now, although in my fear of hell I had consigned myself to this prison where I had no companions but scorpions and wild beasts, I often found myself amid bevies of girls. Helpless, I cast myself at the feet of Jesus, I watered them with my tears, and I subdued my rebellious body with weeks of abstinence. I remember how I often cried aloud all night till the break of day. I used to dread my cell as if it knew my thoughts, and stern and angry with myself, I used to make my way alone into the desert. Wherever I saw hollow valleys, craggy mountains, steep cliffs, there I made my oratory; there the house of correction for my unhappy flesh. There, also, when I had shed copious tears and had strained my eyes to heaven, I sometimes felt myself among angelic hosts and sang for joy and gladness."

No doubt these men were warring against nature. Their yielding to the temptation to obtain spiritual dominance by self-flagellation and fasting may be criticized in the light of modern Christianity. "Fanaticism defies nature," says F. W. Robertson,

"Christianity refines it and respects it. Christianity does not denaturalize, but only sanctifies and refines according to the laws of nature. Christianity does not destroy our natural instincts, but gives them a higher and nobler direction." To all this I must assent, but, at the same time, I cannot but reverence that pure passion for holiness which led men, despairing of acquiring virtue in a degenerate age, to flee from the world and undergo such torments to attain their soul's ideal. The form, the method of their conflict was transient, the spirit and purpose eternal. All honor to them for their magnificent and terrible struggle, which has forever exalted the spiritual ideal, and commanded men everywhere to seek first "the Kingdom of God and its righteousness."

Jerome was always fond of the classics, although pagan writers were not in favor with the early Christians. One night he dreamed he was called to the skies where he was soundly flogged for reading certain pagan authors. This vision interrupted his classical studies for a time. In later years he resumed his beloved Virgil; and he vigorously defended himself against those who charged him

with being a Pagan and an apostate on account of his love for Greek and Roman literature. If his admiration for Virgil was the Devil's work, I but give the Devil his due when I declare that much of the charm of Jerome's literary productions is owing to the inspiration of classic models.

Our attention must now be transferred from Jerome to the high-born Roman matrons, who laid off their silks that they might clothe themselves in the humble garb of the nun. As the narrative proceeds I shall let Jerome speak as often as possible, that the reader may become acquainted with the style of those biographies and eulogies which were the talk of Rome, and which have been admired so highly by succeeding generations.

Those who embraced monasticism in Rome did so in one of two ways. Some sold their possessions, adopted coarse garments, and subsisted on the plainest food, but they did not leave the city and were still to be seen upon the streets. Jerome writes to Pammachius: "Who would have believed that a last descendant of the consuls, an ornament of the race of Camillus, could make up his mind to traverse the city in the black robe of a monk,

and should not blush to appear thus clad in the midst of senators." Some of those who remained at Rome established a sort of retreat for their ascetic friends.

But another class left Rome altogether. Some took up their abode on the rugged isles of the Adriatic or the Mediterranean. Large numbers of them went to the East, principally to Palestine. Jerome was practically the abbot of a Roman colony of monks and nuns. Two motives, beside the general ruling desire to achieve holiness, produced this exodus to the Holy Land, which culminated centuries later in the crusades. One was a desire to see the deserts and caves, the abode of hermits famous for piety and miracles. Jerome, as I have shown, invested these lonely retreats and strange characters with a sort of holy romance, and hence, faith, mingled with curiosity, led men to the East. Another motive was the desire to visit the land of the Saviour, to tread the soil consecrated by his labors of love, to live a life of poverty in the land where He had no home He could call his own.

St. Paula was one of the women who left Rome and went to Palestine. The story of her life is

told in a letter designed to comfort her daughter Eustochium at the time of Paula's death. The epistle begins: "If all the members of my body were to be converted into tongues, and if each of my limbs were to be gifted with a human voice, I could still do no justice to the virtues of the holy and venerable Paula. Of the stock of the Gracchi, descended from the Scipios, she yet preferred Bethlehem to Rome, and left her palace glittering with gold to dwell in a mud cabin." Her husband was of royal blood and had died leaving her five children. At his death, she gave herself to works of charity. The poor and sick she wrapped in her own blankets. She began to tire of the receptions and other social duties which her position entailed upon her. While in this frame of mind, two Eastern bishops were entertained at her home during a gathering of ecclesiastics. They seem to have imparted the monastic impulse, perhaps by the rehearsal of monastic tales, for we are informed that at this time she determined to leave servants, property and children, in order to embrace the monastic life.

Let us stand with her children and kinsfolk on the shore of the sea as they take their final farewell

of Paula. "The sails were set and the strokes of the rowers carried the vessel into the deep. On the shore little Toxotius stretched forth his hands in entreaty, while Rufina, now grown up, with silent sobs besought her mother to wait until she should be married. But still Paula's eyes were dry as she turned them heavenwards, and she overcame her love for her children by her love for God. She knew herself no more as a mother that she might approve herself a handmaid of Christ. Yet her heart was rent within her, and she wrestled with her grief as though she were being forcibly separated from parts of herself. The greatness of the affection she had to overcome made all admire her victory the more. Though it is against the laws of nature, she endured this trial with unabated faith."

So the vessel ploughed onward, carrying the mother who thought she was honoring God and attaining the true end of being through ruthless strangling of maternal love. She visited Syria and Egypt and the islands of Ponta and Cyprus. At the feet of the hermit fathers she begged their blessing and tried to emulate the virtues she

believed they possessed. At Jerusalem she fell upon her face and kissed the stone before the sepulcher. "What tears she shed, what groans she uttered, what grief she poured out all Jerusalem knows!"

She established two monasteries at Bethlehem, one of which was for women. Here, with her daughter, she lived a life of rigid abstinence. Her nuns had nothing they could call their own. If they paid too much attention to dress Paula said, "A clean body and a clean dress mean an unclean soul." To her credit, she was more lenient with others than with herself. Jerome admits she went to excess, and prudently observes: "Difficult as it is to avoid extremes, the philosophers are quite right in their opinion that virtue is a mean and vice an excess, or, as we may express it in one short sentence, in nothing too much." Paula swept floors and toiled in the kitchen. She slept on the ground, covered by a mat of goat's hair. Her weeping was incessant. As she meditated over the Scriptures, her tears fell so profusely that her sight was endangered. Jerome warned her to spare her eyes, but she said: "I must disfigure that face

which, contrary to God's commandment, I have painted with rouge, white lead and antimony." If this be a sin against the Almighty, bear witness, O ye daughters of Eve! Her love for the poor continued to be the motive of her great liberality. In fact, her giving knew no bounds. Fuller wisely remarks that "liberality must have banks as well as a stream;" but Paula said: "My prayer is that I may die a beggar, leaving not a penny to my daughter and indebted to strangers for my winding sheet." Her petition was literally granted, for she died leaving her daughter not only without a penny but overwhelmed in a mass of debts.

As Jerome approaches the description of Paula's death, he says: "Hitherto the wind has all been in my favor and my keel has smoothly ploughed through the heaving sea. But now my bark is running upon the rocks, the billows are mountain high, and imminent shipwreck awaits me." Yet Paula, like David, must go the way of all the earth. Surrounded by her followers chanting psalms, she breathed her last. An immense concourse of people attended her funeral. Not a single monk lingered in his cell. Thus, the twenty hard years

of self-torture for this Roman lady of culture ended in the rest of the grave.

Upon her tombstone was placed this significant inscription:

> "Within this tomb a child of Scipio lies,
> A daughter of the far-famed Pauline house,
> A scion of the Gracchi, of the stock
> Of Agamemnon's self, illustrious:
> Here rests the lady Paula, well beloved
> Of both her parents, with Eustochium
> For daughter; she the first of Roman dames
> Who hardship chose and Bethlehem for Christ."

Another interesting character of that period was Marcella, a beautiful woman of illustrious lineage, a descendant of consuls and prefects. After a married life of seven years her husband died. She determined not to embark on the matrimonial seas a second time, but to devote herself to works of charity. Cerealis, an old man, but of consular rank, offered her his fortune that he might consider her less his wife than his daughter. "Had I a wish to marry," was her noble reply, "I should look for a husband and not for an inheritance." Disdaining all enticements to remain in society, she began her

monastic career with joy and turned her home into a retreat for women who, like herself, wished to retire from the world. It is not known just what rules governed their relations, but they employed the time in moderate fasting, prayers and alms-giving.

Marcella lavished her wealth upon the poor. Jerome praises her philanthropic labors thus: "Our widow's clothing was meant to keep out the cold and not to show her figure. She stored her money in the stomachs of the poor rather than to keep it at her own disposal." Seldom seen upon the streets, she remained at home, surrounded by virgins and widows, obedient and loving to her mother. Among the high-born women it was regarded as degrading to assume the costume of the nun, but she bore the scorn of her social equals with humility and grace.

This quiet and useful life was rudely and abruptly ended by a dreadful catastrophe. Alaric the Goth had seized and sacked Rome. The world stood aghast. The sad news reached Jerome in his cell at Bethlehem, who expressed his sorrow in forceful language: "My voice sticks in my throat; and as

I dictate, sobs choke my utterance. The city which has taken the whole world is itself taken." Rude barbarians invaded the sanctity of Marcella's retreat. They demanded her gold, but she pointed to the coarse dress she wore to show them she had no buried treasures. They did not believe her, and cruelly beat her with cudgels. A few days after the saintly heroine of righteousness went to her long home to enjoy richly-merited rest and peace.

> "Who can describe the carnage of that night?
> What tears are equal to its agony?
> Of ancient date a sovran city falls;
> And lifeless in its streets and houses lie
> Unnumbered bodies of its citizens.
> In many a ghastly shape doth death appear."

Marcella and her monastic home fell in the general ruin, but in the words of Horace, she left "a monument more enduring than brass." Her noble life, so full of kind words and loving deeds, still stirs the hearts of her sisters who, while they may reject her ascetic ideal, will, nevertheless, try to emulate her noble spirit. As Jerome said of Paula: "By shunning glory she earned glory; for glory follows virtue as its shadow; and deserting

those who seek it, it seeks those who despise it."

Still another woman claims our attention,—Fabiola, the founder of the first hospital. Lecky declares that "the first public hospital and the charity planted by that woman's hand overspread the world, and will alleviate to the end of time the darkest anguish of humanity." She, too, was a widow who refused to marry again, but broke up her home, sold her possessions, and with the proceeds founded a hospital into which were gathered the sick from the streets. She nursed the sufferers and washed their ulcers and wounds. No task was beneath her, no sacrifice of personal comfort too great for her love. Many helped her with their gold, but she gave herself. She also aided in establishing a home for strangers at Portus, which became one of the most famous inns of the time. Travelers from all parts of the world found a welcome and a shelter on landing at this port. When she died the roofs of Rome were crowded with those who watched the funeral procession. Psalms were chanted, and the gilded ceilings of the churches resounded to the music in commendation of her loving life and labors.

These and other characters of like zeal and fortitude exemplify the spirit of the men and women who interested the West in monasticism. Much as their errors and extravagances may be deplored, there is no question that some of them were types of the loftiest Christian virtues, inspired by the most laudable motives.

Noble and true are Kingsley's words: "We may blame those ladies, if we will, for neglecting their duties. We may sneer, if we will, at their weaknesses, the aristocratic pride, the spiritual vanity, we fancy we discover. We must confess that in these women the spirit of the old Roman matrons, which seemed to have been dead so long, flashed up for one splendid moment ere it sank into the darkness of the middle ages."

Monasticism and Women

The origin of nunneries was coeval with that of monasteries, and the history of female recluses runs parallel to that of the men. Almost every male order had its counterpart in some sort of a sisterhood. The general moral character of these female

associations was higher than that of the male organizations. I have confined my treatment in this work to the monks, but a few words may be said at this point concerning female ascetics.

Hermit life was unsuited to women, but we know that at a very early date many of them retired to the seclusion of convent life. It will be recalled that in the biography of St. Anthony, before going into the desert he placed his sister in the care of some virgins who were living a life of abstinence, apart from society. It is very doubtful if any uniform rule governed these first religious houses, or if definitely organized societies appear much before the time of Benedict. The variations in the monastic order among the men were accompanied by similar changes in the associations of women.

The history of these sisterhoods discloses three interesting and noteworthy facts that merit brief mention:

First, the effect of a corrupt society upon women. As in the case of men, women were moved to forsake their social duties because they were weary of the sensual and aimless life of Rome. Those

were the days of elaborate toilettes, painted faces and blackened eyelids, of intrigues and foolish babbling. Venial faults—it may be thought—innocent displays of tender frailty; but woman's nature demands loftier employments. A great soul craves occupations and recognizes obligations more in harmony with the true nobility of human nature. Rome had no monitor of the higher life until the monks came with their stories of heroic self-abnegation and unselfish toil. The women felt the force and truth of Jerome's criticism of their trifling follies when he said: "Do not seek to appear over-eloquent, nor trifle with verse, nor make yourself gay with lyric songs. And do not, out of affectation, follow the sickly taste of married ladies, who now pressing their teeth together, now keeping their lips wide apart, speak with a lisp, and purposely clip their words, because they fancy that to pronounce them naturally is a mark of country breeding."

Professor Dill is inclined to discount the testimony of Jerome respecting the morals of Roman society. He thinks Jerome exaggerated the perils surrounding women. He says: "The truth is

Jerome is not only a monk but an artist in words; and his horror of evil, his vivid imagination, and his passion for literary effect, occasionally carry him beyond the region of sober fact. There was much to amend in the morals of the Roman world. But we must not take the leader of a great moral reformation as a cool and dispassionate observer." But this observation amounts to nothing more than a cautionary word against mistaking evils common to all times for special symptoms of excessive immorality. Professor Dill practically concedes the truthfulness of contemporary witnesses, including Jerome, when he says: "Yet, after all allowances, the picture is not a pleasant one. We feel that we are far away from the simple, unworldly devotion of the freedmen and obscure toilers whose existence was hardly known to the great world before the age of the Antonines, and who lived in the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount and in constant expectation of the coming of their Lord. The triumphant Church, which has brought Paganism to its knees, is very different from the Church of the catacombs and the persecutions." The picture which Jerome draws of the Roman women

is indeed repulsive, and Professor Dill would gladly believe it to be exaggerated, but, nevertheless, he thinks that "if the priesthood, with its enormous influence, was so corrupt, it is only probable that it debased the sex which is always most under clerical influence."

But far graver charges cling to the memories of the Roman women. Crime darkened every household. The Roman lady was cruel and impure. She delighted in the blood of gladiators and in illicit love. Roman law at this time permitted women to hold and to control large estates, and it became a fad for these patrician ladies to marry poor men, so that they might have their husbands within their power. All sorts of alliances could then be formed, and if their husbands remonstrated, they, holding the purse strings, were able to say: "If you don't like it you can leave." A profligate himself, the husband usually kept his counsel, and as a reward, dwelt in a palace. "When the Roman matrons became the equal and voluntary companions of their lords," says Gibbon, "a new jurisprudence was introduced, that marriage, like other partnerships, might be dis-

solved by the abdication of one of the associates." I have but touched the fringe of a veil I will not lift; but it is easy to understand why those women who cherished noble sentiments welcomed the monastic life as a pathway of escape from scenes and customs from which their better natures recoiled in horror.

Secondly, the fine quality of mercy that distinguishes woman's character deserves recognition. Even though she retired to a convent, she could not become so forgetful of her fellow creatures as her male companions. From the very beginning we observe that she was more unselfish in her asceticism than they. It is true the monk forsook all, and to that extent was self-sacrificing, but in his desire for his own salvation, he was prone to neglect every one else. The monk's ministrations were too often confined to those who came to him, but the nun went forth to heal the diseased and to bind up the broken-hearted. As soon as she embraced the monastic life we read of hospitals. The desire for salvation drove man into the desert; a Christ-like mercy and divine sympathy kept his sister by the couch of pain.

Lastly, a word remains to be said touching the question of marriage. At first, the nun sometimes entered the marriage state, and, of course, left the convent; but, beginning with Basil, this practice was condemned, and irrevocable vows were exacted. In 407, Innocent I. closed even the door of penitence and forgiveness to those who broke their vows and married.

Widows and virgins alike assumed the veil. Marriage itself was not despised, because the monastic life was only for those who sought a higher type of piety than, it was supposed, could be attained amid the ordinary conditions of life. But marriage, as well as other so-called secular relations, was eschewed by those who wished to make their salvation sure. Jerome says: "I praise wedlock, I praise marriage, but it is because they give me virgins; I gather the rose from the thorns, the gold from the earth, the pearl from the shell." He therefore tolerated marriage among people contented with ordinary religious attainments, but he thought it incompatible with true holiness. Augustine admitted that the mother and her daughter may be both in heaven, but one a bright

and the other a dim star. Some writers, as Helvidius, opposed this view and maintained that there was no special virtue in an unmarried life; that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was also the mother of other children, and as such was an example of Christian virtue. Jerome brought out his guns and poured hot shot into the enemies' camp. In the course of his answer, which contained many intolerant and acrimonious statements, he drew a comparison between the married and the unmarried state. It is interesting because it reflects the opinions of those who disparaged marriage, and reveals the character of the principles which the early Fathers advocated. It is very evident from this letter against Helvidius that Jerome regarded all secular duties as interfering with the pursuit of the highest virtue.

"Do you think," he says, "there is no difference between one who spends her time in prayer and fasting, and one who must, at her husband's approach, make up her countenance, walk with a mincing gait, and feign a show of endearment? The virgin aims to appear less comely; she will wrong herself so as to hide her natural attractions.

The married woman has the paint laid on before her mirror, and, to the insult of her Maker, strives to acquire something more than her natural beauty. Then come the prattling of infants, the noisy household, children watching for her word and waiting for her kiss, the reckoning up of expenses, the preparation to meet the outlay. On one side you will see a company of cooks, girded for the onslaught and attacking the meat; there you may hear the hum of a multitude of weavers. Meanwhile a message is delivered that her husband and his friends have arrived. The wife, like a swallow, flies all over the house. She has to see to everything. Is the sofa smooth? Is the pavement swept? Are the flowers in the cup? Is dinner ready? Tell me, pray, amid all this, is there room for the thought of God?"

Such was Roman married life as it appeared to Jerome. The very duties and blessings that we consider the glory of the family he despised. I will return to his views later, but it is interesting to note the absence at this period, of the modern and true idea that God may be served in the performance of household and other secular duties. Women fled

from such occupations in those days that they might be religious. The disagreeable fact of Peter's marriage was overcome by the assertion that he must have washed away the stain of his married life by the blood of his martyrdom. Such extreme views arose partly as a reaction from and a protest against the dominant corruption, a state of affairs in which happy and holy marriages were rare.

The Spread of Monasticism in Europe

Much more might be said of monastic life in Rome, were it not now necessary to treat of the spread of monasticism in Europe. There are many noble characters whom we ought to know, such as Ambrose, one of Christendom's greatest bishops, who led a life of poverty and strict abstinence, like his sister Marcella, whom we have met. He it was, of whom the Emperor Theodosius said: "I have met a man who has told me the truth." Well might he so declare, for Ambrose refused him admission to the church at Milan, because his hands were red with the blood of the murdered, and succeeded in persuading him to submit to dis-

cipline. To Ambrose may be applied the words which Gibbon wrote of Gregory Nazianzen: "The title of Saint has been added to his name, but the tenderness of his heart and the elegance of his genius reflect a more pleasing luster on his memory."

The story of John, surnamed Chrysostom, who was born at Antioch, in 347, is exceedingly interesting. He was a young lawyer, who entered the priesthood after his baptism. He at once set his heart on the monastic life, but his mother took him to her chamber, and, by the bed where she had given him birth, besought him in fear, not to forsake her. "My son," she said in substance, "my only comfort in the midst of the miseries of this earthly life is to see thee constantly, and to behold in thy traits the faithful image of my beloved husband, who is no more. When you have buried me and joined my ashes with those of your father, nothing will then prevent you from retiring into the monastic life. But so long as I breathe, support me by your presence, and do not draw down upon you the wrath of God by bringing such evils upon me who have given you no offence." This

singularly tender petition was granted, but Chrysostom turned his home into a monastery, slept on the bare floor, ate little and seldom, and prayed much by day and by night.

After his mother's death Chrysostom enjoyed the seclusion of a monastic solitude for six years, but impairing his health by excessive self-mortification he returned to Antioch in 380. He rapidly rose to a position of commanding influence in the church. His peerless oratorical and literary gifts were employed in elevating the ascetic ideal and in unsparing denunciations of the worldly religion of the imperial court. He incurred the furious hatred of the young and beautiful Empress Eudoxia, who united her influence with that of the ambitious Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria, and Chrysostom was banished from Constantinople, but died on his way to the remote desert of Pityus. His powerful sermons and valuable writings contributed in no small degree to the spread of monasticism among the Christians of his time.

Then there was Augustine, the greatest thinker since Plato. "We shall meet him," says Schaff,

"alike on the broad highways and the narrow foot-paths, on the giddy Alpine heights and in the awful depths of speculation, wherever philosophical thinkers before him or after him have trod." He, too, like all the other leaders of thought in his time, was ascetic in his habits. Although he lived and labored for thirty-eight years at Hippo, a Numidian city about two hundred miles west of Carthage, in Africa, Augustine was regarded as the intellectual head not only of North Africa but of Western Christianity. He gathered his clergy into a college of priests, with a community of goods, thus approaching as closely to the regular monastic life as was possible to secular clergymen. He established religious houses and wrote a set of rules, consisting of twenty-four articles, for the government of monasteries. These rules were superseded by those of Benedict, but they were resuscitated under Charlemagne and reappeared in the famous Austin Canons of the eleventh century. Little did Augustine think that a thousand years later an Augustinian monk—Luther—would abandon his order to become the founder of modern Protestantism.

Augustine published a celebrated essay,—"On the Labor of Monks,"—in which he pointed out the dangers of monachism, condemned its abuses, and ended by sighing for the quiet life of the monk who divided his day between labor, reading and prayer, whilst he himself spent his years amid the noisy throng and the perplexities of his episcopate.

These men, and many others, did much to further monasticism. But we must now leave sunny Africa and journey northward through Gaul into the land of the hardy Britons and Scots.

Athanasius, the same weary exile whom we have encountered in Egypt and in Rome, had been banished by Constantine to Treves, in 336. In 346 and 349 he again visited Gaul. He told the same story of Anthony and the Egyptian hermits with similar results.

The most renowned ecclesiastic of the Gallican church, whose name is most intimately associated with the spread of monasticism in Western Europe, before the days of Benedict, was Saint Martin of Tours. He lived about the years 316–396 A. D. The chronicle of his life is by no means trustworthy, but that is essential neither to popularity

nor saintship. Only let a Severus describe his life and miracles in glowing rhetoric and fantastic legend and the people will believe it, pronouncing him greatest among the great, the mightiest miracle-worker of that miracle-working age.

Martin was a soldier three years, against his will, under Constantine. One bleak winter day he cut his white military coat in two with his sword and clothed a beggar with half of it. That night he heard Jesus address the angels: "Martin, as yet only a catechumen, has clothed me with his garment." After leaving the army he became a hermit, and, subsequently, bishop of Tours. He lived for years just outside of Tours in a cell made of interlaced branches. His monks dwelt around him in caves cut out of scarped rocks, overlooking a beautiful stream. They were clad in camel's hair and lived on a diet of brown bread, sleeping on a straw couch.

But Martin's monks did not take altogether kindly to their mode of life. Severus records an amusing story of their rebellion against the meager allowance of food. The Egyptian could exist on a few figs a day. But these rude Gauls, just emerg-

ing out of barbarism, were accustomed to devour great slices of roasted meat and to drink deep draughts of beer. Such sturdy children of the northern forests naturally disdained dainty morsels of barley bread and small potations of wine. True, Athanasius had said, "Fasting is the food of angels," but these ascetic novices, in their perplexity, could only say: "We are accused of gluttony; but we are Gauls; it is ridiculous and cruel to make us live like angels; we are not angels; once more, we are only Gauls." Their complaint comes down to us as a pathetic but humorous protest of common sense against ascetic fanaticism; or, regarded in another light, it may be considered as additional evidence of the depravity of the natural man.

In spite of all complaints, however, Martin did not abate the severity of his discipline. As a bishop he pushed his monastic system into all the surrounding country. His zeal knew no bounds, and his strength seemed inexhaustible. "No one ever saw him either gloomy or merry," remarks his biographer. Amid many embarrassments and difficulties he was ever the same, with a countenance

full of heavenly serenity. He was a great miracle-worker—that is, if everything recorded of him is true. He cast out demons and healed the sick; he had strange visions of angels and demons, and, wonderful to relate, thrice he raised bodies from the dead.

But all conquerors are at last vanquished by the angel of death, and Martin passed into the company of the heavenly host and the category of saints. Two thousand monks attended his funeral. His fame spread all over Europe. Tradition tells us he was the uncle of Saint Patrick of Ireland. Churches were dedicated to him in France, Germany, Scotland and England. The festival of his birth is celebrated on the eleventh of November. In Scotland this day still marks the winter term, which is called Martinmas. Saint Martin's shrine was one of the most famous of the middle ages, and was noted for its wonderful cures. No saint is held, even now, in higher veneration by the French Catholic.

It is not known when the institution was planted in Spain, but in 380 the council of Saragossa forbade priests to assume monkish habits. Germany

received the institution some time in the fifth century. The introduction of Christianity as well as of monasticism into the British Isles is shrouded in darkness. A few jewels of fact may be gathered from the legendary rubbish. It is probable that before the days of Benedict, Saint Patrick, independently of Rome, established monasteries in Ireland and preached the gospel there; and, without doubt, before the birth of Benedict of Nursia, there were monks and monasteries in Great Britain. The monastery of Bangor is said to have been founded about 450 A. D.

It is probable that Christianity was introduced into Britain before the close of the second century, and that monasticism arose some time in the fifth century. Tertullian, about the beginning of the third century, boasts that Christianity had conquered places in Britain where the Roman arms could not penetrate. Origen claimed that the power of the Savior was manifest in Britain as well as in Muritania. The earliest notice we have of a British church occurs in the writings of the Venerable Bede (673–735 A. D.), a monk whose numerous and valuable works on English history

entitle him to the praise of being "the greatest literary benefactor this or any other nation has produced." He informs us that a British king—Lucius—embraced Christianity during the reign of the Emperor Aurelius, and that missionaries were sent from Rome to Britain about that time. Lingard says the story is suspicious, since "we know not from what source Bede, at the distance of five centuries, derived his information." It seems quite likely that there must have been some Christians among the Roman soldiers or civil officials who lived in Britain during the Roman occupation of the country. The whole problem has been the theme of so much controversy, however, that a fuller discussion is reserved for the next chapter.

Disorders and Oppositions

But was there no protest against the progress of these ascetic teachings? Did the monastic institution command the unanimous approval of the church from the outset? There were many and strong outcries against the monks, but they were

quickly silenced by the counter-shouts of praise. Even when rebellion against the system seemed formidable, it was popular nevertheless. The lifted hand was quickly struck down, and voices of opposition suddenly hushed. Like a mighty flood the movement swept on,—kings, when so inclined, being powerless to stop it. As Paula was carried fainting from the funeral procession of Blæsilla, her daughter, whispers such as these were audible in the crowd: "Is not this what we have often said? She weeps for her daughter, killed with fasting. How long must we refrain from driving these detestable monks out of Rome? Why do we not stone them or hurl them into the Tiber? They have misled this unhappy mother; that she is not a nun from choice is clear. No heathen mother ever wept for her children as she does for Blæsilla." And this is Paula, who, choked with grief, refused to weep when she sailed from her children for the far East!

Unhappily, history is often too dignified to retail the conversations of the dinner-table and the gossip of private life. But this narrative indicates that in many a Roman family the monk was feared,

despised and hated. Sometimes everyday murmurs found their way into literature and so passed to posterity. Rutilius, the Pagan poet, as he sails before a hermit isle in the Mediterranean, exclaims: "Behold, Capraria rises before us; that isle is full of wretches, enemies of light. I detest these rocks, scene of a recent shipwreck." He then goes on to declare that a young and rich friend, impelled by the furies, had fled from men and gods to a living tomb, and was now decaying in that foul retreat. This was no uncommon opinion. But contrast it with what Ambrose said of those same isles: "It is there in these isles, thrown down by God like a collar of pearls upon the sea, that those who would escape from the charms of dissipation find refuge. Nothing here disturbs their peace, all access is closed to the wild passions of the world. The mysterious sound of waves mingles with the chant of hymns; and, while the waters break upon the shores of these happy isles with a gentle murmur, the peaceful accents of the choir of the elect ascend toward Heaven from their bosom." No wonder the Milanese ladies guarded their daughters against this theological poet.

Even among the Christians there were hostile as well as friendly critics of monasticism; Jovinian, whom Neander compares to Luther, is a type of the former. Although a monk himself, he disputed the thesis that any merit lay in celibacy, fasting or poverty. He opposed the worship of saints and relics, and believed that one might retain possession of his property and make good use of it. He assailed the dissolute monks and claimed that many of Rome's noblest young men and women were withdrawn from a life of usefulness into the desert. He held that there was really but one class of Christians, namely, those who had faith in Christ, and that a monk could be no more. But Jovinian was far in advance of his age, and it was many years before the truth of his view gained any considerable recognition. He was severely attacked by Jerome, who called him a Christian Epicurean, and was condemned as a heretic by a synod at Milan, in 390. Thus the reformers were crushed for centuries. The Pagan Emperor, Julian, and the Christian, Valens, alike tried in vain to resist the emigration into the desert. Thousands fled, in times of peril to the state, from

their civil and military duties, but the emperors were powerless to prevent the exodus.

That there were grounds for complaint against the monks we may know from the charges made even by those who favored the system. Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, and in fact almost every one of the Fathers tried to correct the growing disorders. We learn from them that many fled from society, not to become holy, but to escape slavery and famine; and that many were lazy and immoral. Their "shaven heads lied to God." Avarice, ambition, or cowardice ruled hearts that should have been actuated by a love of poverty, self-sacrifice or courage. "Quite recently," says Jerome, "we have seen to our sorrow a fortune worthy of Crœsus brought to light by a monk's death, and a city's alms collected for the poor, left by will to his sons and successors."

Many monks traveled from place to place selling sham relics. Augustine wrote against "those hypocrites who, in the dress of monks, wander about the provinces carrying pretended relics, amulets, preservatives, and expecting alms to feed their lucrative poverty and recompense their pre-

tended virtue." It is to the credit of the Fathers of the church that they boldly and earnestly rebuked the vices of the monks and tried to purge the monastic system of its impurities.

But the church sanctioned the monastic movement. She could not have done anything else. "It is one of the most striking occurrences in history," says Harnack, "that the church, exactly at the time when she was developing more and more into a legal institution and a sacramental establishment, outlined a Christian life-ideal which was incapable of realization within her bounds, but only alongside of her. The more she affiliated herself with the world, the higher and more superhuman did she make her ideal."

It is also noteworthy that this "life-ideal" seems to have led, inevitably, to fanaticism and other excesses, so that even at this early date there was much occasion for alarm. Gross immorality was disclosed as well as luminous purity; indolence and laziness as well as the love of sacrifice and toil. So we shall find it down through the centuries. "The East had few great men," says Milman, "many madmen; the West, madmen

enough, but still very many, many great men." We have met some madmen and some great men. We shall meet more of each type.

After 450 A. D., monasticism suffered an eclipse for over half a century. It seemed as if the Western institution was destined to end in that imbecility and failure which overtook the Eastern system. But there came a man who infused new life into the monastic body. He systematized its scattered principles and concentrated the energies of the wandering and unorganized monks.

Our next visit will be to the mountain home of this renowned character, fifty miles to the west of Rome. "A single monk," says Montalembert, "is about to form there a center of spiritual virtue, and to light it up with a splendor destined to shine over regenerated Europe for ten centuries to come."

III

THE BENEDICTINES

SAINT BENEDICT, the founder of the famous monastic order that bears his name, was born at Nursia, about 480 A. D. His parents, who were wealthy, intended to give him a liberal education; but their plans were defeated, for at fifteen years of age Benedict renounced his family and fortune, and fled from his school life in Rome. The vice of the city shocked and disgusted him. He would rather be ignorant and holy, than educated and wicked. On his way into the mountains, he met a monk named Romanus,—the spot is marked by the chapel of Santa Crocella,—who gave him a hair-cloth shirt and a monastic dress of skins. Continuing his journey with Romanus, the youthful ascetic discovered a sunless cave in the desert of Subiaco, about forty miles from Rome. Into this

cell he climbed, and in it he lived three years. It was so inaccessible that Romanus had to lower his food to him by a rope, to which was attached a bell to call him from his devotions. Once the Devil threw a stone at the rope and broke it.

But Benedict's bodily escape from the wickedness of Rome did not secure his spiritual freedom. "There was a certain lady of thin, airy shape, who was very active in this solemnity; her name was Fancy." Time and again, he revisited his old haunts, borne on the wings of his imagination. The face of a beautiful young girl of previous acquaintance constantly appeared before him. He was about to yield to the temptation and to return, when, summoning all his strength, he made one mighty effort to dispel the illusion forever. Divesting himself of his clothes, he rolled his naked body among the thorn-bushes near his cave. It was drastic treatment, but it seems to have rid his mind effectually of disturbing fancies. This singular self-punishment was used by Godric, the Welsh saint, in the twelfth century. "Failing to subdue his rebellious flesh by this method, he buried a cask in the earthen floor of his cell, filled it with water

and fitted it with a cover, and in this receptacle he shut himself up whenever he felt the titillations of desire. In this manner, varied by occasionally passing the night up to his chin in a river, of which he had broken the ice, he finally succeeded in mastering his fiery nature."

One day some peasants discovered Benedict at the entrance of his cave. Deceived by his savage appearance, they mistook him for a wild beast, but the supposed wolf proving to be a saint, they fell down and reverenced him.

The fame of the young ascetic attracted throngs of hermits, who took up their abodes near his cell. After a time monasteries were established, and Benedict was persuaded to become an abbot in one of them. His strictness provoked much opposition among the monks, resulting in carefully-laid plots to compass the moral ruin of their spiritual guide. An attempt to poison him was defeated by a miraculous interposition, and Benedict escaped to a solitary retreat.

Again the moral hero became an abbot, and again the severity of his discipline was resented. This time a wicked and jealous priest sought to

entrap the saint by turning into a garden in which he was accustomed to walk seven young girls of exquisite physical charms. When Benedict encountered this temptation, he fled from the scene and retired to a picturesque mountain—the renowned Monte Cassino. Let Montalembert describe this celebrated spot among the western Apennines: "At the foot of this rock Benedict found an amphitheatre of the time of the Cæsars, amidst the ruins of the town of Casinum, which the most learned and pious of Romans, Varro, that pagan Benedictine, whose memory and knowledge the sons of Benedict took pleasure in honoring, had rendered illustrious. From the summit the prospect extended on one side towards Arpinum, where the prince of Roman orators was born, and on the other towards Aquinum, already celebrated as the birthplace of Juvenal. . . . It was amidst those noble recollections, this solemn nature, and upon that predestinated height, that the patriarch of the monks of the West founded the capital of the monastic order."

In the year 529 a great stronghold of Paganism in these wild regions gave way to Benedict's faith.

Upon the ruins of a temple to Apollo, and in a grove sacred to Venus, arose the model of Western monasticism,—the cloister of Monte Cassino, which was to shine resplendent for a thousand years. The limitations of my purpose will prevent me from following in detail the fortunes of this renowned retreat, but it may not be out of place to glance at its subsequent history.

Monte Cassino is located three and a half miles to the northeast of the town of Cassino, midway between Rome and Naples. About 589 A. D. the Lombards destroyed the buildings, but the monks escaped to Rome, in fulfilment, so it is claimed, of a prophecy uttered by Benedict. It lay in ruins until restored by Gregory II. in 719, only to be burned in 884 by the Saracens; seventy years later it was again rebuilt. It afterwards passed through a variety of calamities, and was consecrated, for the third time, by Benedict XII., in 1729. Longfellow quotes a writer for the *London Daily News* as saying: "There is scarcely a pope or emperor of importance who has not been personally connected with its history. From its mountain crag it has seen Goths, Lombards, Saracens, Nor-

mans, Frenchmen, Spaniards, Germans, scour and devastate the land which, through all modern history, has attracted every invader."

It was enriched by popes, emperors and princes. In its palmy days the abbot was the first baron in the realm, and commanded over four hundred towns and villages. In 1866, it shared the fate of all the monasteries of Italy. It still stands upon the summit of the mountain, and can be seen by the traveler from the railway in the valley. At present it serves as a Catholic seminary with about two hundred students. It contains a spacious church, richly ornamented with marble, mosaics and paintings. It has also a famous library which, in spite of bad usage, is still immensely valuable. Boccaccio made a visit to the place, and when he saw the precious books so vilely mutilated, he departed in tears, exclaiming: "Now, therefore, O scholar, rack thy brains in the making of books!" The library contains about twenty thousand volumes, and about thirty-five thousand popes' bulls, diplomas and charters. There are also about a thousand manuscripts, some of which are of priceless value, as they date from the sixth century downward, and consist

of ancient Bibles and important medieval literature.

Benedict survived the founding of this monastery fourteen years. His time was occupied in establishing other cloisters, perfecting his rule, and preaching. Many stories are related of his power over the hearts of the untamed barbarians. Galea the Goth, out on a marauding expedition, demanded a peasant to give him his treasures. The peasant, thinking to escape, said he had committed them to the keeping of Benedict. Galea immediately ordered him to be bound on a horse and conducted to the saint. Benedict was seated at the gateway reading when Galea and his prisoner arrived. Looking up from his book he fastened his eyes upon the poor peasant, who was immediately loosed from his bonds. The astonished Galea, awed by this miracle, fell at the feet of the abbot, and, instead of demanding gold, supplicated his blessing. Once a boy was drowning, and, at the command of Benedict, St. Maur, a wealthy young Roman, who had turned monk, walked safely out upon the water and rescued the lad. Gregory also tells us many stories of miraculous healing, and of one resurrection from the dead.

Benedict's last days were linked with a touching incident. His sister, Scholastica, presided over a convent near his own. They met once a year. On his last visit to her, Scholastica begged him to remain and "speak of the joys of Heaven till the morning." But Benedict would not listen; he must return. His sister then buried her face in her hands weeping and praying. Suddenly the sky was overcast with clouds, and a terrific storm burst upon the mountains, which prevented her brother's return. Three days later Benedict saw the soul of his sister entering heaven. On March 21, 543, a short time after his sister's death, two monks beheld a shining pathway of stars over which the soul of Benedict passed from Monte Cassino to heaven. Such, in brief, is the story preserved for us in his biography by the celebrated patron of monasticism, Pope Gregory I.

The Rules of Benedict

The rules, *regulae*, of St. Benedict, are worthy of special consideration, since they constitute the real foundation of his success and of his fame.

His order was by far the most important monastic brotherhood until the thirteenth century. Nearly all the other orders which sprang up during this interval were based upon Benedictine rules, and were really attempts to reform the monastic system on the basis of Benedict's original practice. Other monks lived austere lives and worked miracles, and some of them formulated rules, but it is to Benedict and his rules that we must look for the code of Western monachism. "By a strange parallelism," says Putnam, "almost in the very year in which the great Emperor Justinian was codifying the results of seven centuries of Roman secular legislation for the benefit of the judges and the statesmen of the new Europe, Benedict, on his lonely mountain-top, was composing his code for the regulation of the daily life of the great civilizers of Europe for seven centuries to come."

The rules consist of a preface and seventy-three chapters. The prologue defines the classes of monks, and explains the aim of the "school of divine servitude," as Benedict described his monastery. The following is a partial list of the subjects considered: The character of an abbot, silence, maxims

for good works, humility, directions as to divine service, rules for dormitories, penalties, duties of various monastic officers, poverty, care of the sick, daily rations of food and drink, hours for meals, fasting, entertainment of guests, and dress. They close with the statement that the Benedictine rule is not offered as an ideal of perfection, or even as equal to the teaching of Cassian or Basil, but for mere beginners in the spiritual life, who may thence proceed further.

The Benedictine novitiate extended over one year, but was subsequently increased to three. At the close of this period the novice was given the opportunity to go back into the world. If he still persisted in his choice, he swore before the bones of the saints to remain forever cut off from the rest of his fellow beings. If a monk left the monastery, or was expelled, he could return twice, but if, after the third admission, he severed his connection, the door was shut forever.

The monk passed his time in manual labor, copying manuscripts, reading, fasting and prayer. He was forbidden to receive letters, tokens or gifts, even from his nearest relatives, without permission

from the abbot. His daily food allowance was usually a pound of bread, a pint of wine, cider or ale, and sometimes fish, eggs, fruit or cheese. He was dressed in a black cowl. His clothing was to be suitable to the climate and to consist of two sets. He was also furnished with a straw mattress, blanket, quilt, pillow, knife, pen, needle, handkerchief and tablets. He was, in all things, to submit patiently to his superior, to keep silence, and to serve his turn in the kitchen. In the older days the monks changed their clothes on the occasion of a bath, which used to be taken four times a year. Later, bathing was allowed only twice a year, and the monks changed their clothes when they wished.

Various punishments were employed to correct faults. Sometimes the offender was whipped on the bare shoulders with a thick rod; others had to lie prostrate in the doorway of the church at each hour, so that the monks passed over his body on entering or going out.

The monks formerly rose at two o'clock, and spent the day in various occupations until eight at night, when they retired. The following rules once governed St. Gregory's Monastery in Eng-

land: "3:45 A. M. Rise. 4 A. M. Matins and lauds, recited; half-hour mental prayer; prime *sung;* prime B. V. M. recited. 6:30 A. M. Private study; masses; breakfast for those who had permission. 8 A. M. Lectures and disputations. 10 A. M. Little hours B. V. M., recited; tierce, mass, sext, *sung*. 11:30 A. M. Dinner. 12 noon. None *sung;* vespers and compline B. V. M., recited. 12:30 P. M. Siesta. 1 P. M. Hebrew or Greek lecture. 2 P. M. Vespers *sung*. 2:30 P. M. Lectures and disputations. 4 P. M. Private study. 6 P. M. Supper. 6:30 P. M. Recreation. 7:30 P. M. Public spiritual reading; compline *sung;* matins and lauds B. V. M., recited; half-hour mental prayer. 8:45 P. M. Retire."*

Such a routine suggests a dreary life, but that would depend upon the monk's temperament. Regularity of employment kept him healthy, and if he did not take his sins too much to heart, he was free from gloom. Hill very justly observes: "Whenever men obey that injunction of labor, no matter what their station, there is in the act the element of happiness, and whoever avoids that

*Appendix, Note D.

injunction, there is always the shadow of the unfulfilled curse darkening their path." Thus, their ideal was "to subdue one's self and then to devote one's self," which De Tocqueville pronounces "the secret of strength." How well they succeeded in realizing their ideal by the methods employed we shall see later.

The term "order," as applied to the Benedictines, is used in a different sense from that which it has when used of later monastic bodies. Each Benedictine house was practically independent of every other, while the houses of the Dominicans, Franciscans or Jesuits were bound together under one head. The family idea was peculiar to the Benedictines. The abbot was the father, and the monastery was the home where the Benedictine was content to dwell all his life. In the later monastic societies the monks were constantly traveling from place to place. Taunton says: "As God made society to rest on the basis of the family, so St. Benedict saw that the spiritual family is the surest basis for the sanctification of the souls of his monks. The monastery therefore is to him what the 'home' is to lay-folk. . . . From this

family idea comes another result: the very fact that St. Benedict did not found an Order but only gave a Rule, cuts away all possibility of that narrowing *esprit de corps* which comes so easily to a wide-spread and highly-organized body."

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, however, it became necessary for the general good of each family to secure some kind of union. The Chapter then came into existence, which was a representative body, composed of the heads of the different houses and ordinary monks regularly appointed as delegates. To the Chapter were committed various matters of jurisdiction, and also the power of sending visitors to the different abbeys in the pope's name.

Each society was ruled by an abbot, who governed in Christ's stead. Sometimes the members of the monastery were consulted, the older ones ordinarily, the whole congregation in important matters. But implicit obedience to the abbot, as the representative of God, was demanded by the vows.

The abbot was to be elected by the monks. At various periods popes and princes usurped this power, but the monks always claimed the right as an

original privilege. Carlyle quotes Jocelin on Abbot Samson, who says that the monks of St. Edmundsbury were compelled to submit their choice to Henry II., who, looking at the committee of monks somewhat sternly, said: "You present to me Samson; I do not know him; had it been your prior, whom I do know, I should have accepted him; however, I will now do as you wish. But have a care of yourselves. By the true eyes of God, if you manage badly, I will be upon you."

In Walter Scott's novel, "The Abbot," there is an interesting contrast drawn between the ceremonies attending an abbot's installation, when the monasteries were in their glory, and the pitiable scenes in the days of their decline, when Mary Stuart was a prisoner in Lochleven. In the monastery of Kennaquhair, which had been despoiled by the fury of the times, a few monks were left to mourn the mutilated statues and weep over the fragments of richly-carved Gothic pillars. Having secretly elected an abbot, they assembled in fear and trembling to invest him with the honors of his office. "In former times," says Scott, "this was one of the most splendid of the many pageants which the

hierarchy of Rome had devised to attract the veneration of the faithful. When the folding doors on such solemn occasions were thrown open, and the new abbot appeared on the threshold in full-blown dignity, with ring and mitre and dalmatique and crosier, his hoary standard-bearers and juvenile dispensers of incense preceding him, and the venerable train of monks behind him, his appearance was the signal for the magnificent jubilate to rise from the organ and the music-loft and to be joined by the corresponding bursts of 'Alleluiah' from the whole assembled congregation.

"Now all was changed. Father Ambrose stood on the broken steps of the high altar, barefooted, as was the rule, and holding in his hand his pastoral staff, for the gemmed ring and jewelled mitre had become secular spoils. No obedient vassals came, man after man, to make their homage and to offer the tribute which should provide their spiritual superior with palfrey and trappings. No bishop assisted at the solemnity to receive into the higher ranks of the church nobility a dignitary whose voice in the legislature was as potent as his own."

We are enabled by this partially-quoted descrip-

agine the importance attached to the
in abbot. He became, in feudal times,
he land, the richest man in the community, and a tremendous power in political councils and parliaments. A Benedictine abbot once confessed: "My vow of poverty has given me a hundred thousand crowns a year; my vow of obedience has raised me to the rank of a sovereign prince."

No new principle seems to be disclosed by the Benedictine rules. The command to labor had been emphasized even in the monasteries of Egypt. The Basilian code contained a provision enforcing manual labor, but the work was light and insufficient to keep the mind from brooding. The monastery that was to succeed in the West must provide for men who not only could toil hard, but who must do so if they were to be kept pure and true; it must welcome men accustomed to the dangerous adventures of pioneer life in the vast forests of the North. The Benedictine system met these conditions by a unique combination and application of well-known monastic principles; by a judicious subordination of minor matters to essential discipline; by bringing into

greater prominence the doctrine of labor; by tempering the austerities of the cell to meet the necessities of a severe climate; and lastly, by devising a scheme of life equally adaptable to the monk of sunny Italy and the rude Goth of the northern forests.

It was the splendid fruition of many years of experiment amid varying results. "It shows," says Schaff, "a true knowledge of human nature, the practical wisdom of Rome and adaptation to Western customs; it combines simplicity with completeness, strictness with gentleness, humility with courage and gives the whole cloister life a fixed unity and compact organization, which, like the episcopate, possessed an unlimited versatility and power of expansion."

The Struggle against Barbarism

No institution has contributed as much to the amelioration of human misery or struggled as patiently and persistently to influence society for good as the Christian church. In spite of all that may be said against the followers of the Cross, it still remains true, that they have ever been foremost

in the establishment of peace and justice among men.

The problem that confronted the church when Benedict began his labors, was no less than that of reducing a demoralized and brutal society to law and order. Chaos reigned, selfishness and lust ruled the hearts of Rome's conquerors. The West was desolated by barbarians; the East dismembered and worn out by theological controversy. War had ruined the commerce of the cities and laid waste the rural districts. Vast swamps and tracts of brush covered fields once beautiful with the products of agricultural labor. The minds of men were distracted by apprehensions of some frightful, impending calamity. The cultured Roman, the untutored Goth and the corrupted Christian were locked in the deadly embrace of despair. "Constantly did society attempt to form itself," says Guizot, "constantly was it destroyed by the act of man, by the absence of the moral conditions under which alone it can exist."

But notwithstanding failures and discouragements, the work of reconstructing society moved painfully on, and among the brave master builders was Benedict of Nursia. "He found the world, physical

and social, in ruins," says Cardinal Newman, "and his mission was to restore it in the way,—not of science, but of nature; not as if setting about to do it; not professing to do it by any set time, or by any series of strokes; but so quietly, patiently, gradually, that often till the work was done, it was not known to be doing. It was a restoration rather than a visitation, correction or conversion. The new world he helped to create was a growth rather than a structure."

But the chaos created by the irruption of the barbarous nations at this period seriously affected the moral character and influence of the clergy and the monks. The church seemed unequal to the stupendous undertaking of converting the barbarians. The monks, as a class, were lawless and vicious. Benedict himself testifies against them, and declares that they were "always wandering and never stable; that they obey their own appetites, whereunto they are enslaved." Unable to control their own desires by any law whatsoever, they were unfitted to the task before them. It was imperative, then, that unity and order should be introduced among the monasteries; that some sort of a uniform

rt the existing conditions, should be adopted, not only for the preservation of the monastic institution, but for the preparation of the monks for their work. Therefore, although the Christianity of that time was far from ideal, it was, nevertheless, a religion within the grasp of the reckless barbarians; and subsequent events prove that it possessed a moral power capable of humanizing manners, elevating the intellect, and checking the violent temper of the age.

Excepting always the religious services of the Benedictine monks, their greatest contribution to civilization was literary and educational.* The rules of Benedict provided for two hours a day of reading, and it was doubtless this wise regulation that stimulated literary tastes, and resulted in the collecting of books and the reproduction of manuscripts. "Wherever a Benedictine house arose, or a monastery of any one of the Orders, which were but offshoots from the Benedictine tree, books were multiplied and a library came into existence, small indeed at first, but increasing year by year, till the wealthier houses had gathered together col-

*Appendix, Note E.

lections of books that would do credit to a modern university." There was great danger that the remains of classic literature might be destroyed in the general devastation of Italy. The monasteries rescued the literary fragments that escaped, and preserved them. "For a period of more than six centuries the safety of the literary heritage of Europe,—one may say of the world,—depended upon the scribes of a few dozen scattered monasteries."

The literary services of the earlier monks did not consist in original production, but in the reproduction and preservation of the classics. This work was first begun as a part of the prescribed routine of European monastic life in the monastery at Vivaria, or Viviers, France, which was founded by Cassiodorus about 539. The rules of this cloister were based on those of Cassian, who died in the early part of the fifth century. Benedict, at Monte Cassino, followed the example of Cassiodorus, and the Benedictine Order carried the work on for the seven succeeding centuries.

Cassiodorus was a statesman of no mean ability, and for over forty years was active in the political

circles of his time, holding high official positions under five different Roman rulers. He was also an exceptional scholar, devoting much of his energy to the preservation of classic literature. His magnificent collection of manuscripts, rescued from the ruins of Italian libraries, "supplied material for the pens of thousands of monastic scribes." If we leave out Jerome, it is to Cassiodorus that the honor is due for joining learning and monasticism.

"Thus," remarks Schaff, "that very mode of life, which, in its founder, Anthony, despised all learning, became in the course of its development an asylum of culture in the rough and stormy times of the migration and the crusades, and a conservator of the literary treasures of antiquity for the use of modern times."

Cassiodorus, with a noble enthusiasm, inspired his monks to their task. He even provided lamps of ingenious construction, that seem to have been self-trimming, to aid them in their work. He himself set an example of literary diligence, astonishing in one of his age.

Putnam is justified in his praises of this remarkable character when he declares: "It is not too

much to say that the continuity of thought and civilization of the ancient world with that of the middle ages was due, more than to any other one man, to the life and labors of Cassiodorus."

But the monk was more than a scribe and a collector of books, he became the chronicler and the school-teacher. "The records that have come down to us of several centuries of medieval European history are due almost exclusively to the labors of the monastic chroniclers." A vast fund of information, the value of which is impaired, it is true, by much useless stuff, concerning medieval customs, laws and events, was collected by these unscientific historians and is now accessible to the student.

At the end of the ninth century nearly all the monasteries of Europe conducted schools open to the children of the neighborhood. The character of the educational training of the times is not to be judged by modern standards. A beginning had to be made, and that too at a time "when neither local nor national governments had assumed any responsibilities in connection with elementary education, and when the municipalities were too ignorant, and

in many cases too poor, to make provision for the education of the children." It is therefore to the lasting credit of Benedict, inspired no doubt by the example of Cassiodorus, that he commanded his monks to read, encouraged literary work, and made provision for the education of the young.

The Benedictines rendered a great social service in reclaiming deserted regions and in clearing forests. "The monasteries," says Maitland, "were, in those days of misrule and turbulence, beyond all price, not only as places where (it may be imperfectly, but better than elsewhere) God was worshipped, . . . but as central points whence agriculture was to spread over bleak hills and barren downs and marshy plains, and deal its bread to millions perishing with hunger and its pestilential train." Roman taxation and barbarian invasions had ruined the farmers, who left their lands and fled to swell the numbers of the homeless. The monk repeopled these abandoned but once fertile fields, and carried civilization still deeper into the forests. Many a monastery with its surrounding buildings became the nucleus of a modern city. The more awful the darkness of the forest solitudes, the more the monks

loved it. They cut down trees in the heart of the wilderness, and transformed a soil bristling with woods and thickets into rich pastures and ploughed fields. They stimulated the peasantry to labor, and taught them many useful lessons in agriculture. Thus, they became an industrial, as well as a spiritual, agency for good.

The habits of the monks brought them into close contact with nature. Even the animals became their friends. Numerous stories have been related of their wonderful power over wild beasts and their conversations with the birds. "It is wonderful," says Bede, "that he who faithfully and loyally obeys the Creator of the universe, should, in his turn, see all the creatures obedient to his orders and his wishes." They lived, so we are told, in the most intimate relations with the animal creation. Squirrels leaped to their hands or hid in the folds of their cowls. Stags came out of the forests in Ireland and offered themselves to some monks who were ploughing, to replace the oxen carried off by the hunters. Wild animals stopped in their pursuit of game at the command of St. Laumer. Birds ceased singing at the request of some monks

until they had chanted their evening prayer, and at their word the feathered songsters resumed their music. A swan was the daily companion of St. Hugh of Lincoln, and manifested its miraculous knowledge of his approaching death by the most profound melancholy. While all the details of such stories are not to be accepted as literally true, no doubt some of this poetry of monastic history rests upon interesting and charming facts.

A fuller discussion of the permanent contributions which the monk made to civilization is reserved for the last chapter. I have somewhat anticipated a closer scrutiny of his achievements in order to present a clearer view of his life and labors. His religious duties were, perhaps, wearisome enough. We might tire of his monotonous chanting and incessant vigils, but it is gratifying to know that he also engaged in practical and useful employments. The convent became the house of industry as well as the temple of prayer. The forest glades echoed to the stroke of the axe as well as to hymns of praise. Yes, as Carlyle writes of the twelfth century, "these years were no chimerical vacuity and dreamland peopled with mere vaporous phantasms, but a

green solid place, that grew corn and several other things. The sun shone on it, the vicissitudes of seasons and human fortunes. Cloth was woven and worn; ditches were dug, furrowed fields ploughed and houses built."

The Spread of the Benedictine Rule

It is generally held that Benedict had no presentiment of the vast historical importance of his system; and that he aspired to nothing beyond the salvation of his own soul and those of his brethren.

But the rule spread with wonderful rapidity. In every rich valley arose a Benedictine abbey. Britain, Germany, Scandinavia, France and Spain adopted his rule. Princes, moved by various motives, hastened to bestow grants of land on the indefatigable missionary who, undeterred by the wildness of the forest and the fierceness of the barbarian, settled in the remotest regions. In the various societies of the Benedictines there have been thirty-seven thousand monasteries and one hundred and fifty thousand abbots. For the space of two hun-

dred and thirty-nine years the Benedictines governed the church by forty-eight popes chosen from their order. They boast of two hundred cardinals, seven thousand archbishops, fifteen thousand bishops and four thousand saints. The astonishing assertion is also made that no less than twenty emperors and forty-seven kings resigned their crowns to become Benedictine monks. Their convents claim ten empresses and fifty queens. Many of these earthly rulers retired to the seclusion of the monastery because their hopes had been crushed by political defeat, or their consciences smitten by reason of crime or other sins. Some were powerfully attracted by the heroic element of monastic life, and these therefore spurned the luxuries and emoluments of royalty, in order by personal sacrifice to achieve spiritual domination in this life, and to render their future salvation certain. But whatever the motive that drew queens and princes to the monastic order, the retirement of such large numbers of the nobility indicates the influence of a religious system which could cope so successfully with the attractions of the palace and the natural passion for political dominion.

Saint Gregory the Great, the biographer of

Benedict, who was born at Rome in 540 A. D., and so was nearly contemporaneous with Benedict, was a zealous promoter of the monastic ideal, and did as much as any one to advance its ecclesiastical position and influence. He founded seven monasteries with his paternal inheritance, and became the abbot of one of them. He often expressed a desire to escape the clamor of the world by retirement to a lonely cell. Inspired by the loftiest estimates of his holy office, he sought to reform the church in its spirit and life. Many of his innovations in the church service bordered upon a dangerous and glittering pomp; but the musical world will always revere his memory for the famous chants that bear his name.

Gregory surrounded himself with monks, and did everything in his power to promote their interests. He increased the novitiate to two years, and exempted certain monasteries from the control of the bishops. Other popes added to these exemptions, and thus widened the breach which already existed between the secular clergy and the monks. He also fixed a penalty of lifelong imprisonment for abandonment of the monastic life.

Under Gregory's direction many missionary enterprises were carried on, notably that of Augustine to England. The story runs that one day Gregory saw some men and beautiful children from Britain put up for sale in the market-place. Deeply sighing, he exclaimed: "Alas for grief! That the author of darkness possesses men of so bright countenance, and that so great grace of aspect bears a mind void of inward grace!" He then asked the children the name of their nation. "Angles," was the reply. "It is well," he said, "for they have *angelic* faces. What is the name of your province?" It was answered, "Deira." "Truly," he said, "*De-ira-ns*, drawn from anger, and called to the mercy of Christ. How is your king called?" They answered, "Ælla, or Ella." Then he cried "*Alleluia!* it behooves that the praise of God the Creator should be sung in those parts." While it is hard to accept this evidently fanciful story in its details, it seems quite probable that the sale of some English slaves in a Roman market drew the attention of Gregory to the needs of Britain.

Some years afterwards, in 596, Gregory commis-

sioned Augustine, prior of the monastery of St. Andrew's on the Celian Hill, at Rome, with forty companions, to preach the gospel in Britain. When this celebrated missionary landed on the island of Thanet, he found monasticism had preceded him. But what was the nature of this British monasticism? On that question Rome and England are divided.

The Romanist declares that no country received the Christian faith more directly from the Church of Rome than did England; that the most careful study of authentic records reveals no doctrinal strife, no diversity of belief between the early British monks and the Pope of Rome; that St. Patrick, of Ireland, and St. Columba, of Scotland, were loyal sons of their Roman mother.

The Anglican, on the other hand, believes that Christianity was introduced into Britain independently of Rome. As to the precise means employed, he has his choice of ten legends. He may hold with Lane that it is reasonable to suppose one of Paul's ardent converts, burning with fervent zeal, led the Britons to the cross. Or he may argue with others: "What is more natural than to

imagine that Joseph of Arimathea, driven from Palestine, sailed away to Britain." In proof of this assumption, we are shown the chapel of St. Joseph, the remains of the oldest Christian church, where the holy-thorn blossoms earlier than in any other part of England. Many Anglicans wisely regard all this as legendary. It is also held that St. Patrick and St. Columba were not Romanists, but represented a type of British Christianity, which, although temporarily subjected to Rome, yet finally threw off the yoke under Henry VIII. and reasserted its ancient independence. Still others declare that when Augustine was made archbishop, the seat of ecclesiastical authority was transferred from Rome to Canterbury, and the English church became an independent branch of the universal church. It was Catholic, but not Roman.

The difficulty of ascertaining when and by whom Christianity was originally introduced into southern Britain must be apparent to every student. But some things may be regarded as historically certain. The whole country had been desolated by war when Augustine arrived. For a hundred and fifty years the brutality and ignorance of the barbarians had

reigned supreme. All traces of Roman civilization had nearly disappeared with the conquest of the heathen Anglo-Saxons. Whatever may be thought about the subsequent effects of the triumph of Roman Christianity, it is due to Rome to recognize the fact that with the coming of the Roman missionaries religion and knowledge began a new life.

The Anglo-Saxons had destroyed the Christian churches and monasteries, whose origin, as we have seen, is unknown. They drove away or massacred the priests and monks. Christianity was practically extirpated in those districts subject to the Germanic yoke. But when Augustine landed British monks were still to be found in various obscure parts of the country, principally in Ireland and Wales. Judging from what is known of these monks, it is safe to say that their habits and teachings were based on the traditions of an earlier Christianity, and that originally British Christianity was independent of Rome.

The monks in Britain at the time when Augustine landed differed from the Roman monks in their tonsures, their liturgy, and the observance of Easter, although no material difference in doctrine

can be established. The clergy did not always observe the law of celibacy nor perhaps the Roman rules of baptism. It is also admitted, even by Catholic historians, that the British monks refused to acknowledge Augustine their archbishop; that this question divided the royal family; and that the old British church was not completely subdued until Henry II. conquered Ireland and Wales. These statements are practically supported by Ethelred L. Taunton, an authoritative writer, whose sympathy with Roman monasticism is very strong. He thinks that a few of the British monks submitted to Augustine, but of the rest he says: "They would not heed the call of Augustine, and on frivolous pretexts refused to acknowledge him."

A large body of British monks retired to the monastery of Bangor, and when King Ethelfrid invaded the district of Wales, he slew twelve hundred of them in the open field as they were upon their knees praying for the success of the Britons. It was then that the power of the last remnants of Celtic or British Christianity was practically broken, and the Roman type henceforth gradually acquired the mastery.

Montalembert says: "In no other country has Catholicism been persecuted with more sanguinary zeal; and, at the same time, none has greater need of her care." While the latter observation is open to dispute, it is certainly true that England has never remained quiet under the dominion of Rome. Goldsmith's tribute to the English character suggests a reasonable explanation of this historic fact:

> "Stern o'er each bosom reason holds her state,
> Fierce in their native hardiness of soul,
> True to imagined right, above control,
> While even the peasant boasts those rights to scan,
> And learns to venerate himself as man."

The fact to be remembered, as we emerge from these ecclesiastical quarrels and the confusions of this perplexing history, is that the monks were the intellectual and religious leaders of those days. They exercised a profound influence upon English society, and had much to do with the establishment of English institutions.

But, on the other hand, the continent is indebted to England for the gift of many noble monks who served France and Germany as intellectual and moral guides, at a time when these countries were

in a state of extreme degradation. Boniface, the Apostle to the Germans, who is regarded by Neander as the Father of the German church and the real founder of the Christian civilization of Germany, was the gift of the English cloisters, and a native of Devonshire. Alcuin, the ecclesiastical prime minister of Charlemagne and the greatest educator of his time, was born and trained in England. Nearly all the leading schools of France were founded or improved by this celebrated monk. It was largely due to Alcuin's unrivaled energy and splendid talents that Charlemagne was able to make so many and so glorious educational improvements in his empire.

Notable among the men who introduced the Benedictine rule into England was St. Wilfred (634–709 A. D.), who had traveled extensively in France and Italy, and on his return carried the monastic rule into northern Britain. He also is credited with establishing a course of musical training in the English monasteries. He was the most active prelate of his age in the founding of churches and monasteries, and in securing uniformity of discipline and harmony with the Church of Rome.

One of the most famous monastic retreats of those days was the wild and lonely isle of Iona, the Mecca of monks and the monastic capital of Scotland. It is a small island, three miles long and one broad, lying west of Scotland. Many kings of Scotland were crowned here on a stone which now forms a part of the British coronation chair. Its great monastery enjoyed the distinction from the sixth to the eighth century of being second to none in its widespread influence in behalf of the intellectual life of Europe.

This monastery was originally founded in the middle of the sixth century by Columba, the Apostle to Caledonia, an Irish saint actively associated with a wonderful intellectual awakening. The rule of the monastery is unknown, but it is probable that it could not have been, at the first, of the Benedictine type. Columba's followers traveled as missionaries and teachers to all parts of Europe, and it is said, they dared to sail in their small boats even as far as Iceland.

Dr. Johnson says in his "Tour to the Hebrides": "We are now treading that illustrious island which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions,

whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge and the blessing of religion. That man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona." The monastery which Columba founded here was doubtless of the same character as the establishments in Ireland. Many of these Celtic buildings were made of the branches of trees and supported by wooden props. It was some time before properly-constructed wooden churches or monasteries became general in these wild regions. In such rude huts small libraries were collected and the monks trained to preach. Ireland was then the center of knowledge in the North. Greek, Latin, music and such science as the monks possessed were taught to eager pupils. Copies of their manuscripts are still to be found all over Europe. Their schools were open to the rich and poor alike. The monks went from house to house teaching and distributing literature. As late as the sixteenth century, students from various parts of the Continent were to be found in these Irish schools.

There is an interesting story related of Columba's literary activities. It is said that on one occasion while visiting his master, Finnian, he undertook to make a clandestine copy of the abbot's Psalter. When the master learned of the fact, he indignantly charged Columba with theft, and demanded the copy which he had made, on the ground that a copy made without permission of the author was the property of the original owner, because a transcript is the offspring of the original work. Putnam, to whom I am indebted for this story, says: "As far as I have been able to ascertain, this is the first instance which occurs in the history of European literature of a contention for a copyright." The conflict for this copyright afterwards developed into a civil war. The copy of the Latin Psalter "was enshrined in the base of a portable altar as the national relic of the O'Donnell clan," and was preserved by that family for thirteen hundred years. It was placed on exhibition as late as 1867, in the museum of the Royal Irish Academy.

Enough has now been said to enable the reader to understand something of the spirit and labors of the monks in an age characteristically bar-

baric. For five centuries, from the fifth to the tenth, the condition of Europe was deplorable. "It may be doubted," says an old writer, "whether the worst of the Cæsars exceeded in dark malignity, or in capriciousness of vengeance, the long-haired kings of France." The moral sense of even the most saintly churchmen seems to have been blunted by familiarity with atrocities and crimes. Brute force was the common method of exercising control and administering justice. The barbarians were bold and independent, but cruel and superstitious. Their furious natures needed taming and their rude minds tutoring. Even though during this period churches and monasteries were raised in amazing numbers, yet the spirit of barbarism was so strong that the Christians could scarcely escape its influence. The power of Christianity was modified by the nature of the people, whose characters it aimed to transform. The remarks of William Newton Clarke respecting the Christians of the first and second centuries are also appropriate to the period under review: "The people were changed by the new faith, but the new faith was changed by the people." Christianity "made a new people,

better than it found them, but they in turn made a new Christianity, with its strong points illustrated and confirmed in their experience. but with weakness brought in from their defect '

Yes, the work of civilizing the Germanic nations was a task of herculean proportions and of tremendous significance. Out of these tribes were to be constructed the nations of modern Europe. To this important mission the monks addressed themselves with such courage, patience, faith and zeal, as to entitle them to the veneration of posterity. With singular wisdom and unflinching bravery they carried on their missionary and educational enterprises, in the face of discouragements and obstacles sufficient to dismay the bravest souls. The tenacious strength of those wild forces that clashed with the tenderer influences of the cloister should soften our criticism of the inconsistencies which detract from the glory of those early ministers of righteousness and exemplars of gentleness and peace.

IV

REFORMED AND MILITARY ORDERS

THE MONASTIC institution was never entirely good or entirely bad. In periods of general degradation there were beautiful exceptions in monasteries ruled by pure and powerful abbots. From the beginning various monasteries soon departed from their discipline by sheltering iniquity and laziness, while other establishments faithfully observed the rules. But during the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries there was a widespread decline in the spirit of devotion and a shameful relaxation of monastic discipline. Malmesbury, King Alfred, Alcuin, in England, and many continental writers, sorrowfully testified against the monks because of their vices, their revelings, their vain and gorgeous ornaments of dress and their waning zeal for virtue. The priests hunted and fought, prayed, preached, swore

and drank as they pleased. "We cannot wonder," says an anonymous historian, "that they should commit the more reasonable offence of taking wives." Disorders were common everywhere; the monastic vows were sadly neglected. Political and religious ideals were lost sight of amid the prevailing confusion and wild commotion of those dark days. "It is true," says Carlyle, "all things have two faces, a light one and a dark. It is true in three centuries much imperfection accumulates; many an ideal, monastic or otherwise, shooting forth into practice as it can, grows to a strange reality; and we have to ask with amazement, Is this your ideal? For alas the ideal has to grow into the real, and to seek out its bed and board there, often in a sorry way."

This, then, may be accepted as the usual history of a monastery or a monastic order. First, vows of poverty, obedience and chastity zealously cherished and observed; as a result of loyalty to this ideal, a spirit of devotion to righteousness is created, and a pure, lofty type of Christian life is formed, which, if not the highest and truest, is sufficiently exalted to win the reverence of worldly men and an extra-

ordinary power over their lives and affections. There naturally follow numerous and valuable gifts of land and gold. The monks become rich as well as powerful. Then the decline begins. Vast riches have always been a menace to true spirituality. Perhaps they always will be. The wealthy monk falls a prey to pride and arrogance; he becomes luxurious in his habits, and lazy in the performance of duty. Vice creeps in and his moral ruin is complete. The transformation in the character of the monk is accompanied by a change in public opinion. The monk is now an eyesore; his splendid buildings are viewed with envy by some, with shame by others. Then arise the vehement cries for the destruction of his palatial cloister, and the heroic efforts of the remnant that abide faithful to reform the institution. This has been the pathway over which every monastic order has traveled. As long as there was sufficient vitality to give birth to reformatory movements, new societies sprang up as off-shoots of the older orders, some of which adopted the original rules, while others altered them to suit the views of the reforming founder. "For indeed," says

Trench, "those orders, wonderful at their beginning, and girt up so as to take heaven by storm, seemed destined to travel in a mournful circle from which there was no escape." These facts partly explain the reformatory movements which appear from the ninth century on.

The first great saint to enter the lists against monastic corruption was Benedict of Aniane (750–821 A. D.), a member of a distinguished family in southern France. The Benedictine rule in his opinion was formed for novices and invalids. He attributed the prevailing laxity among the monks to the mild discipline. As abbot of a monastery he undertook to reform its affairs by adopting a system based on Basil of Asia Minor and Pachomius of Egypt. But he leaned too far back for human nature in the West, and the conclusion was forced upon him that Benedict of Nursia had formulated a set of rules as strict as could be enforced among the Western monks. Accordingly he directed his efforts to secure a faithful observance of the original Benedictine rules, adding, however, a number of rigid and burdensome regulations. Although at first the monks doubted his sanity, kicked him

and spat on him, yet he afterwards succeeded in gathering about three hundred of them under his rule. Several colonies were sent out from his monastery, which was built on his patrimonial estate near Montpellier. His last establishment, which was located near Aix-la-Chapelle, became famous as a center of learning and sanctity.

One of the most celebrated reform monasteries was the convent of Cluny, or Clugny, in Burgundy, about fifteen miles from Lyons, which was founded by Duke William of Aquitaine in 910. It was governed by a code based on the rule of St. Benedict. The monastery began with twelve monks under Bruno, but became so illustrious that under Hugo there were ten thousand monks in the various convents under its rule. It was made immediately subject to the pope,—that is, exempt from the jurisdiction of the bishop. Some idea of its splendid equipment may be formed from the fact that it is said, that in 1245, after the council of Lyons, it entertained Innocent IV., two patriarchs, twelve cardinals, three archbishops, fifteen bishops, many abbots, St. Louis, King of France, several princes and princesses, each with a considerable

retinue, yet the monks were not incommoded. It gave to the church three popes,—Gregory VII., Urban II. and Paschal II.

From his cell at Cluny, Hildebrand, who became the famous Gregory VII., looked out upon a world distracted by war and sunk in vice. "In Hildebrand's time, while he was studying those annals in Cluny," says Thomas Starr King, "a boy pope, twelve years old, was master of the spiritual scepter, and was beginning to lead a life so shameful, foul and execrable that a subsequent pope said, 'he shuddered to describe it.'"

Connected with the monastery was the largest church in the world, surpassed only a little, in later years, by St. Peter's at Rome. Its construction was begun in 1089 by the abbot Hugo, and it was consecrated in 1131, under the administration of Peter the Venerable. It boasted of twenty-five altars and many costly works of art.

So great was the fame and influence of this establishment that numerous convents in France and Italy placed themselves under its control, thus forming "The Congregation of Cluny."

After the administration of Peter the Venerable

(1122–1156), this illustrious house began to succumb to the intoxication of success, and it steadily declined in character and influence until its property was confiscated by the Constituent Assembly, in 1799, and the church sold for one hundred thousand francs. It is now in ruin.

But in spite of every attempt at reform during the ninth and tenth centuries the decline of the continental monasteries continued. Many persons of royal blood, accustomed to the license of palaces, entered the cloister and increased the disorders. The monks naturally respected their blood and relaxed the discipline in their favor. The result was costly robes, instead of the simple, monastic garb, riotous living, and a general indifference to spirituality. Spurious monasteries sprang up with rich lay-abbots at their head, who made the office hereditary in their families. Laymen were appointed to rich benefices simply that they might enjoy the revenues. These lay-abbots even went so far as to live with their families in their monasteries, and rollicking midnight banquets were substituted for the asceticism demanded by the vows. They traveled extensively attended by

splendid retinues. Some of the monks seemed intent on nothing but obtaining charters of privileges and exemptions from civil and military duties.

In England the state of affairs was even more distressing than on the Continent. The evil effects of the Saxon invasion, the demoralization that accompanied the influx of paganism, and the almost complete destruction of the religious institutions of British Christianity have already been noted. About the year 700, the island was divided among fifteen petty chiefs, who waged war against one another almost incessantly. Christianity, as introduced by Augustine, had somewhat mitigated the ferocity of war, and England had begun to make some approach toward a respect for law and a veneration for the Christian religion, when the Danes came, and with them another period of disgraceful atrocities and blighting heathenism. The Danish invasion had almost extirpated the monastic institution in the northern districts. Carnage and devastation reigned everywhere. Celebrated monasteries fell in ruins and the monks were slain or driven into exile. Hordes of barbaric warriors roamed the country, burning and plundering.

"At the close of this calamitous period," says Lingard, in his "History and Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church," "the Anglo-Saxon church presented a melancholy spectacle to the friends of religion: 1. The laity had resumed the ferocious manners of their pagan forefathers. 2. The clergy had grown indolent, dissolute and illiterate. 3. The monastic order had been apparently annihilated. It devolved on King Alfred, victorious over his enemies, to devise and apply the remedies for these evils." The good king endeavored to restore the monastic institution, but, owing to the lack of candidates for the monastic habit, he was compelled to import a colony of monks from Gaul.

The moral results of Alfred's reformatory measures, as well as those of his immediate successors, were far from satisfactory, although he did vastly stimulate the educational work of the monastic schools. He devoted himself so faithfully to the gathering of traditions, that he is said to be the father of English history. The tide of immorality, however, was too strong to be stemmed in a generation or two. It was a century and a half

before there was even an approach to substantial victory over the disgraceful abuses among the clergy and the monks.

The churchman who is credited with doing most to distinguish the monks as a zealous and faithful body was Dunstan (924–988 A. D.), first Abbot of Glastonbury, then Bishop of Winchester, and finally Archbishop of Canterbury. He is the most conspicuous ecclesiastical personage in the history of those dark days, but his character and labors have given rise to bitter and extensive controversy.

It was Dunstan's chief aim to subjugate the Anglo-Saxon church to the power of Rome, and to correct existing abuses by compelling the clergy and the monks to obey the rule of celibacy. He was a fervent believer in the efficacy of the Benedictine vows, and in the value of clerical celibacy as a remedy for clerical licentiousness. Naturally, Protestant writers, who hold that papal supremacy never was a blessing in any country or in any age, and who think that clerical celibacy has always been a fruitful source of crime and sin, condemn the reforms of Dunstan in the most unqualified terms. A statement of a few of the many and perplexing

facts may assist us to form a fairly just judgment of the man and his work.

The principle of sacerdotal celibacy appeared early in the history of Christianity, and for many centuries it was the subject of sharp contention. Roman Catholics themselves have been divided upon it. In every Christian country, from the Apostolic period onward, there were priests and teachers who opposed the imposition of this rule upon the clergy, and, on the other hand, there were those who practiced and advocated celibacy as the indispensable guarantee of spiritual power and purity.

What the rule of celibacy was at this period, in England, seems uncertain. Lingard maintains that marriage was always permitted to the clergy in minor orders, who were employed in various subordinate positions, but that those in higher orders, whose office it was to minister at the altar and to offer the sacrifice, were expressly bound to a life of the strictest continence. During the invasion of the Danes, when confusion reigned, many priests in the higher orders had not only forsaken their vows of chastity, but had plunged into frightful immoralities; and

married clerks of inferior orders were raised to the priesthood to fill the ranks depleted by war. These promoted clerks were previously required to separate from their wives, but apparently many of them did not do so. Consequently, from several causes, the married priests became a numerous body, and since the common opinion seems to have been that a married priest was disgracing his office, this body was regarded as a menace to the welfare of the church and the state.

Lea, in his elaborate "History of Sacerdotal Celibacy," holds that the rule of celibacy was only binding on the regulars, or monks, and that the secular priesthood was at liberty to marry. But from several other passages in his work it seems that he also recognizes the fact that, while marriage was common, it was in defiance of an ancient canon. "It is evident," he says, "that the memory of the ancient canons was not forgotten, and that their observance was still urged by some ardent churchmen, but that the customs of the period had rendered them virtually obsolete, and that no sufficient means existed of enforcing obedience. If open scandals and shameless bigamy

and concubinage could be restrained, the ecclesiastical authorities were evidently content. Celibacy could not be enjoined as a law, but was rendered attractive by surrounding it with privileges and immunities denied to him who yielded to the temptations of the flesh."

Throughout Western Christendom the law of celibacy was openly and shamefully trampled upon, and every reformer seemed to think that the very first step toward any improvement in clerical morals was to be taken by enforcing this rule.

When Dunstan commenced his reforms, the clergy were guilty of graver sins than that of living in marriage relations. Adultery, bigamy, swearing, fighting and drinking were the order of the day. The monasteries were occupied by secular priests with wives or concubines. All the chroniclers of this period agree in charging the monks and clergy with a variety of dissipations and disorders.

It is quite clear, therefore, that in Dunstan's view he was doing the only right thing in trying to correct the existing abuses by compelling the priests to adopt that celibate life without which it was popularly believed the highest holiness and the largest

usefulness could not be attained. In the light of this purpose and this common opinion of his time, Dunstan and his mission should be judged.

Dunstan was aided in his work by King Edgar the Pacific, who, by the way, was himself compelled to go without his crown seven years for violating the chastity of a nun. Oswald, the Bishop of Worcester, and Ethelwold, the Bishop of Winchester, were also zealously engaged in the task of reform.

A law was enacted providing that priests, deacons and sub-deacons should live chastely or resign. As a result of this law, many priests were ejected from the monasteries and from their official positions. Strict monks were put in their places. A strong opposition party was created, and the ejected clergy aroused such discontent that a civil war was barely averted. This state of things continued until the Norman invasion, when the monks and secular clergy joined forces in the common defence of their property and ecclesiastical rights.

It would seem that many writers, misled by legends for which Dunstan must not be held responsible, and blinded by religious prejudice, have unjustly charged him with hypocrisy and even crime. All his methods

may not be defensible when estimated in the light of modern knowledge, and even his ideal may be rejected when judged by modern standards of Christian character, but he must be considered with the moral and intellectual life of his times in full view. He was a champion of the oppressed, a friend of the poor, an unflinching foe of sinful men in the pulpit or on the throne. His will was inflexible, his independence noble and his energy untiring. In trying to bring the Anglo-Saxon church into conformity to Rome he was actuated by a higher motive than the merely selfish desire for ecclesiastical authority. He regarded this harmony as the only remedy for the prevailing disorders. He believed, like many other churchmen of unquestioned purity and honesty, that it was necessary to compel temporal authorities to recognize the power of the church in order to overcome that defiance of moral law which was the chief characteristic of the kings and princes in that turbulent period.

What the Anglo-Saxon church might have been if the rule of celibacy had not been forced upon her, and if she had not submitted to Roman authority in other matters, is a theme for specula-

tion only. The fact is that Dunstan found a church corrupt to the core and left it, as a result of his purifying efforts, with some semblance, to say the least, of moral influence and spiritual purity. Some other kind of ecclesiastical polity than that advocated by Dunstan might have achieved the same results as his, but the simple fact is that none did. In so far as Dunstan succeeded in his monastic measures, he laid the foundations of an ecclesiastical power which afterwards became a serious menace to the political freedom of the Anglo-Saxon race. The battle begun by him raged fiercely between the popes, efficiently supported by the monks, and the kings of England, with varying fortunes, for many centuries. But perhaps, under the plans of that benign Providence who presides over the destiny of nations, it was essentially in the interests of civilization, that the lawlessness of rulers and the vices of the people should be restrained by that ecclesiastical power, which, in after years, and at the proper time, should be forced to recede to its legitimate sphere and functions.

Another celebrated reformatory movement was begun by St. Bruno, who founded the Carthusian

Order about the year 1086. Ruskin says: "In their strength, from the foundation of the order at the close of the eleventh century to the beginning of the fourteenth, they reared in their mountain fastnesses and sent out to minister to the world a succession of men of immense mental grasp and serenely authoritative innocence, among whom our own Hugh of Lincoln, in his relations with Henry II. and Cœur de Lion, is to my mind the most beautiful sacerdotal figure known to me in history."

Bruno, with six companions, established the famous Grand Chartreuse in a rocky wilderness, near Grenoble, in France, separated from the rest of the world by a chain of wild mountains, which are covered with ice and snow for two-thirds of the year.

Until the time of Guigo (1137), the Grand Chartreuse was governed by unwritten rules. Thirteen monks only were permitted to live together, and sixteen converts in the huts at the foot of the hill. The policy of this monastery was at first opposed to all connection with other monasteries. But applications for admission were so numerous that colonies were sent out in various directions, all

subject to the mother house. The Carthusians differed in many respects from other orders. The rules of Dom Guigo indicate that the chief aim was to preclude the monks from intercourse with the world, and largely with each other, for each monk had separate apartments, cooked his own food, and so rarely met with his brethren, that he was practically a hermit. The clothing consisted of a rough hair shirt, worn next the skin, a white cassock over it, and, when they went out, a black robe. Fasting was observed at least three days a week, and meat was strictly forbidden. Respecting contact with women Dom Guigo says: "Under no circumstances whatever do we allow women to set foot within our precincts, knowing as we do that neither wise man, nor prophet, nor judge, nor the entertainer of God, nor the sons of God, nor the first created of mankind, fashioned by God's own hands, could escape the wiles and deceits of women."

Blistering and bleeding, as well as fasting, were employed to control evil impulses. On the whole, the austerities were as severe as human nature in that wild and cold region could endure. Yet the prosperity that rewarded the piety and labors of the

Carthusian monks proved more than a match for their rigorous discipline, and in the middle of the thirteenth century we read charges of laxity and disorder.

The Carthusians settled in England in the twelfth century, and had a famous monastery in London, since called the Charterhouse. The order was in many respects the most successful attempt at reform, but as has been said, "the whole order, and each individual member, is like a petrifaction from the Middle Ages." Owing to its extremely solitary ideal and its severe discipline, it was unfitted to secure extensive control, or to gain a permanent influence upon the rapidly-developing European nations. Its chief contributions to modern civilization were made by the gift of noble men who passed from the seclusion of the cell into the active life of the world, thus practically proving that the monks' greatest usefulness was attained when loyalty to their vows yielded to a broader ideal of Christian character and service.

Thus the months passed into years and the years into centuries. Man was slowly working out his salvation. Painfully, laboriously he emerged out

of barbarism into the lower forms of civilization; wearily he trudged on his way toward the universal kingdom of righteousness and peace.

There were many other attempts at reform which may not even be mentioned, but one character deserves brief consideration,—Bernard of Clairvaux,—the fairest flower of those corrupt days. The order to which he belonged was the Cistercians, so named because their mother house was at Citeaux (Latin, *Cistercium*), in France. Its members are sometimes called the "White Monks," because of their white tunics. Their buildings, with their bare walls and low rafters, were a rebuke to the splendid edifices of the richer orders. Austere simplicity characterized their churches, liturgy and habits. Gorgeousness in decoration and ostentation in public services were carefully avoided. They used no pictures, stained glass or images. Once a week they flogged their sinful bodies. Only four hours' sleep was allowed. Seeking out the wildest spots and most rugged peaks they built their retreats, beautiful in their simplicity and furnishing some of the finest examples of monastic architecture. The order spread into England, where the first

SAINT BERNARD

AFTER AN ENGRAVING BY AMBROISE TARDIEU, FROM A PAINTING ON GLASS IN THE CONVENT OF THE R. P. MINIMES, AT RHEIMS

Cistercians were characterized by devoutness and poverty. After a while the hand of fate wrote of them as it had of so many, "none were more greedy in adding farm to farm; none less scrupulous in obtaining grants of land from wealthy patrons." In general, the order was no better and no worse than the rest, but its chief glory is derived from the luster that was shed upon it by Bernard.

This illustrious counselor of kings and Catholic saint was born in Burgundy in 1091. When about twenty years of age he entered the monastery at Citeaux with five of his brothers. His genius might have secured ecclesiastical preferment, but he chose to dig ditches, plant fields and govern a monastery. He entered the cloister at Citeaux because the monks were few and poor, and when it became crowded because of his fame, and its rule became lax because of the crowds, he left the cloister to found a home of his own. The abbot selected twelve monks, following the number of apostles, and at their head placed young Bernard. He led the twelve to the valley of Wormwood, and there, in a cheerless forest, he established the monastery of Clairvaux, or Clear Valley. His rule was fiercely

severe because he himself loved hardships and rough fare. "It in no way befits religion," he writes, "to seek remedies for the body, nor is it good for health either. You may now and then take some cheap herb,—such as poor men may,—and this is done sometimes. But to buy drugs, to hunt up doctors, to take doses, is unbecoming to religion and hostile to purity." His success in winning men to the monastic life was almost phenomenal. It was said that "mothers hid their sons, wives their husbands, and companions their friends, lest they be persuaded by his eloquent message to enter the cloister." "He was avoided like a plague," says one.

Bernard's monks changed the whole face of the country by felling trees and tilling the ground. Their spiritual power rid the valley of Wormwood of its robbers, and the district grew rich and prosperous. Thus Bernard became the most famous man of his time. He was the arbiter in papal elections, the judge in temporal quarrels, the healer of schisms and a powerful preacher of the crusades. He was the embodiment of all that was best in the thought of his age. His weaknesses and faults may largely be explained by the fact that no man can rise

entirely above the spirit of his times and absolutely free himself from all pernicious tendencies. "As an advocate for the rights of the church, for the immunities of the clergy, no less than for the great interests of morality, he was fierce, intractable, unforgiving, haughty and tyrannical." There was, however, no note of insincerity in his work or writings, and no tinge of hypocrisy in fervent zeal. He was brave, honest and pure; controlled always by a consuming passion for the moral welfare of the people.

Our chief interest in Bernard relates to his monastic work which shed undying luster on his name. Vaughan, in his "Hours with the Mystics," says of him: "His incessant cry for Europe is, Better monasteries, and more of them. Let these ecclesiastical castles multiply; let them cover and command the land, well garrisoned with men of God, and then, despite all heresy and schism, theocracy will flourish, the earth shall yield her increase, and all people praise the Lord. . . . Bernard had the satisfaction of improving and extending monasticism to the utmost; of sewing together, with tolerable success, the rended vesture of the

papacy; of suppressing a more popular and more scriptural Christianity for the benefit of his despotic order; of quenching for a time, by the extinction of Abelard, the spirit of free inquiry, and of seeing his ascetic and superhuman ideal of religion everywhere accepted as the genuine type of Christianity."

But in spite of Dunstans, Brunos and Bernards, the monastic institution keeps on crumbling. The edifice will not stand much more propping and tinkering. While we admire this display of moral force, this commendable struggle of fresh courage and new hope against disintegrating forces, the conviction gains ground that something is radically wrong with the institution. There is something in it which fosters greed and desperate ambition. "Is it not a shame," we feel compelled to ask, "that so much splendid, chivalrous courage and magnificent energy should be expended in trying to prevent a structure from falling, which, it seems, could not possibly have been saved?" But while the decay could not be stayed, we must admire the noble aims and pious enthusiasm of the reformers who sought to preserve an institution which to them seemed the only hope of a sinful world.

Dr. Storrs, in his life of Bernard, says: "His soon-canonized name has shone starlike in history ever since he was buried; and it will not hereafter decline from its height or lose its luster, while men continue to recognize with honor the temper of devoted Christian consecration, a character compact of noble forces, and infused with self-forgetful love for God and man."

The Military Religious Orders

The life of Bernard forms an appropriate introduction to a consideration of the Military Religious Orders. Although weary with labor and the weight of years, he traveled over Europe preaching the second crusade. "To kill or to be killed for Christ's sake is alike righteous and alike safe," this was his message to the world. In spite of the opposition of court advisers, Bernard induced Louis VII. and Conrad of Germany to take the crusader's vow. He gave the Knights Templars a new rule and kindled afresh a zeal for the knighthood. Although the members of the Military Orders were not monks in the strict sense of the word, yet they

were soldier-monks, and as such deserve to be mentioned here.

At the basis of all monastic orders, as has been pointed out, were the three vows of obedience, celibacy and poverty. Certain orders, by adding to these rules other obligations, or by laying special stress on one of the three ancient vows, produced new and distinct types of monastic character and life.

The Knights of the Hospital assumed as their peculiar work the care of the sick. The Begging Friars, as will be seen later, were distinguished by the importance which they attached to the rule of poverty; the Jesuits, by exalting the law of unquestioning obedience. In view of the warlike character of the Middle Ages it is strange the soldier-monk did not appear earlier than he did. The abbots, in many cases, were feudal lords with immense possessions which needed protection like secular property, but as this could not be secured by the arts of peace, we find traces of the union of the soldier and the monk before the distinct orders professing that character. The immediate cause of such organizations was the crusades. There were numerous

societies of this character, some of them so far removed from the monastic type as scarcely to be ranked with monastic institutions. One list mentions two hundred and seven of these Orders of Knighthood, comprising many varieties in theory and practice. The most important were three,—the Knights of the Hospital, or the Knights of St. John; the Knights Templars; and the Teutonic Knights. The Hospitallers wore black mantles with white crosses, the Templars white mantles with red crosses, and the Teutonic Knights white mantles with black crosses. The mantles were in fact the robe of the monk adorned with a cross. The whole system was really a marriage of monasticism and chivalry, as Gibbon says: "The firmest bulwark of Jerusalem was founded in the Knights of the Hospital and of the Temple, that strange association of monastic and military life. The flower of the nobility of Europe aspired to wear the cross and profess the vows of these orders; their spirit and discipline were immortal."

A passage in the Alexiad quoted in Walter Scott's "Robert of Paris" reads: "As for the multitude of those who advanced toward the great city let it

be enough to say, that they were as the stars in the heaven or as the sand of the seashore. They were in the words of Homer, as many as the leaves and flowers of spring." This figurative description is almost literally true. Europe poured her men and her wealth into the East. No one but an eye-witness can conceive of the vast amount of suffering endured by those fanatical multitudes as they roamed the streets of Jerusalem looking for shelter, or lay starving by the roadside on a bed of grass.

The term Hospitallers was applied to certain brotherhoods of monks and laymen. While professing some monastic rule, the members of these societies devoted themselves solely to caring for the sick and the poor, the hospitals in those days being connected with the monasteries.

About the year 1050 some Italian merchants secured permission to build a convent in Jerusalem to shelter Latin pilgrims. The hotels which sprang up after this were gradually transformed into hospitals for the care of the sick and presided over by Benedictine monks. The sick were carefully nursed and shelter granted to as many as could be accommodated. Nobles abandoned the profession of

arms and, becoming monks, devoted themselves to caring for the unfortunate crusaders in these inns. The work rapidly increased in extent and importance. In the year 1099, Godfrey de Bouillon endowed the original hospital, which had been dedicated to St. John. He also established many other monasteries on this holy soil. The monks, most of whom were also knights, formed an organization which received confirmation from Rome, as "The Knights of St. John of Jerusalem." The order rapidly assumed a distinctly military character, for, to do its work completely, it must not only care for the sick in Jerusalem, but defend the pilgrim on his way to the Holy City. This ended in an undertaking to defend Christendom against Mohammedan invasion and in fighting for the recovery of the Holy Sepulcher.

After visiting some of these Palestinian monasteries, a king of Hungary thus describes his impressions: "Lodging in their houses, I have seen them feed every day innumerable multitudes of poor, the sick laid on good beds and treated with great care. In a word, the Knights of St. John are employed sometimes like Martha, in action, and

sometimes like Mary, in contemplation, and this noble militia consecrate their days either in their infirmaries or else in engagements against the enemies of the cross."

The Knights Templars were far more militant than the Knights of St. John, but they also were actuated by the monastic spirit. Bernard tried to inspire this order with a strong Christian zeal so that, as he said, "War should become something of which God could approve." The success which attended its operations led as usual to its corruption and decline. Beginning with a few crusaders leagued together for service and living on the site of the ancient Temple at Jerusalem, it soon widened the scope of its services and became a powerful branch of the crusading army. It was charged by Philip IV. of France, in 1307, with the most fearful crimes, to sustain or to deny which accusations many volumes have been composed. Five years later the order was suppressed and its vast accumulations transferred to the Knights of St. John. "The horrible fate of the Templars," says Allen, "was taken by many as a beginning and omen of the destruction that would soon pass upon

all the hated religious orders. And so this final burst of enthusiasm and splendor in the religious life was among the prognostics of a state of things in which monasticism must fade quite away."

Wondrous changes have taken place in those dark and troubled years since Benedict began his labors at Monte Cassino, in 529. The monk has prayed alone in the mountains, and converted the barbarian in the forest. He has preached the crusades in magnificent cathedrals, and crossed stormy seas in his frail bark. He has made the schools famous by his literary achievements, and taught children the alphabet in the woodland cell. He has been good and bad, proud and humble, rich and poor, arrogant and gentle. He has met the shock of lances on his prancing steed, and trudged barefoot from town to town. He has copied manuscripts in the lonely Scottish isle, and bathed the fevered brow of the pilgrim in the hospital at Jerusalem. He has dug ditches, and governed the world as the pope of the Church. He has held the plow in the furrow, and thwarted the devices of the king. He has befriended the poor, and imposed penance upon princes. He has imitated the poverty and purity of Jesus, and

aped the pomp and vice of kings. He has dwelt solitary on cold mountains, subsisting on bread, roots and water, and he has surrounded himself with menials ready to gratify every luxurious wish, amid the splendor of palatial cloisters. Still there are new types and phases of monasticism yet to appear. The monk has other tasks to undertake, for the world is not yet sufficiently wearied of his presence to destroy his cloister and banish him from the land.

V

THE MENDICANT FRIARS

ABRAHAM LINCOLN only applied a general principle to a specific case when he said, "This nation cannot long endure half slave and half free." Glaring inconsistencies between faith and practice will eventually destroy any institution, however lofty its ideal or noble its foundation. God suffers long and is kind, but His forbearance is not limitless. Monasticism, as has been shown, was never free from serious inconsistency, from moral dualism. But the power of reform prolonged its existence. It was constantly producing fresh models of its ancient ideals. It had a hidden reserve-force from which it supplied shining examples of a living faith and a self-denying love, just at the time when it seemed as if the system was about to perish forever. When these fresh exhibitions of monastic fidelity likewise

became tarnished, when men had tired of them and predicted the speedy collapse of the institution, forth from the cloister came another body of monkish recruits, to convince the world that monasticism was not dead; that it did not intend to die; that it was mightier than all its enemies. The day came, however, when the world lost its confidence in an institution which required such constant reforming to keep it pure, which demanded so much cleansing to keep it clean. Ideals that could so quickly lose their influence for good came to be looked upon with suspicion.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century we are confronted by the anomaly of a church grossly corrupt but widely obeyed. She is nearing the pinnacle of her power and the zenith of her glory, although the parochial clergy have sunk into vice and incapacity, and the monks, as a class, are lazy, ignorant and notoriously corrupt. Two things, especially, command the attention,—first, the immorality and laxity of the monks; and second, the growth of heresies and the tendency toward open schism. The necessity of reform was clearly apprehended by the church as well as by the

heretical parties, but, since the church had such a hold upon society, those who sought to reform the monasteries by returning to old beliefs and ancient customs were much more in favor than those who left the church and opposed her from the outside. The impossibility of substantial, internal reform had not yet come to be generally recognized. As time passed the conviction that it was of no use to attempt reforms from the inside gained ground; then the separatists multiplied, and the shedding of blood commenced. The world had to learn anew that it was futile to put new wine into old bottles or to patch new cloth on an old garment.

"It is the privilege of genius," says Trench, "to evoke a new creation, where to common eyes all appears barren and worn out." Francis and Dominic evoked this new creation; but although the monk now will appear in a new garb, he will prove himself to be about the same old character whom the world has known a great many years; when this discovery is made monasticism is doomed. Perplexed Europe will anxiously seek some means of destruction, but God will have Luther ready to aid in the solution of the problem.

Francis Bernardone, 1182–1226 *A. D.*

Saint Francis, the founder of the Franciscan Order, was born at Assisi, a walled town of Umbria, in Italy. His father, Peter Bernardone, or Bernardo, was in France on business when his son was born and named. On his return, or, as some say, at a later time, he changed his son's name from John to Francis. His wealth enabled him to supply Francis with the funds necessary to maintain his leadership among gay companions. Catholic writers are fond of describing the early years of their saints as marked by vice in order to portray them as miracles of grace. It is therefore uncertain whether Francis was anything worse than a happy, joyous lad, who loved fine clothes, midnight songs and parties of pleasure. He was certainly a very popular and courteous lad, very much in love with the world. During a short service in the army he was taken prisoner. After his release he fell sick, and experienced a temporary disgust with his past life. With his renewed health his love of festivities and dress returned.

Walking out one day, dressed in a handsome new suit, he met a poor and ill-clad soldier; moved to pity, he exchanged his fine clothes for the rags of the stranger. That night Francis dreamed of a splendid castle, with gorgeous banners flying from its ramparts, and suits of armor adorned with the cross. "These," said a voice, "are for you and for your soldiers." We are told that this was intended to be taken spiritually and was prophetic of the Begging Friars, but Francis misunderstood the dream, taking it as a token of military achievements. The next day he set off mounted on a fine horse, saying as he left, "I shall be a great prince." But his weak frame could not endure such rough usage and he was taken sick at Spoleto. Again he dreamed. This time the vision revealed his misinterpretation of the former message, and so, on his recovery, he returned somewhat crestfallen to Assisi, where he gave his friends a farewell feast. Thus at the threshold of his career we note two important facts,—disease and dreams. All through his life he had these fits of sickness, attended by dreams; and throughout his life he was guided by these visions. Neander remarks: "It would be a

matter of some importance if we could be more exactly informed with regard to the nature of his disease and the way in which it affected his physical and mental constitution. Perhaps it might assist us to a more satisfactory explanation of the eccentric vein in his life, that singular mixture of religious enthusiasm bordering insanity; but we are left wholly in the dark."

Francis now devoted himself to his father's business, but dreams and visions continued to distress him. His spiritual fervor increased daily. He grieved for the poor and gave himself to the care of the sick, especially the lepers. During a visit to Rome he became so sad at the sight of desperate poverty that he impetuously flung his bag of gold upon the altar with such force as to startle the worshipers. He went out from the church, exchanged his clothes for a beggar's rags, and stood for hours asking alms among a crowd of filthy beggars.

But though Francis longed to associate himself in some way with the lowest classes, he could obtain no certain light upon his duty. While prostrated before the crucifix, in the dilapidated church of

St. Damian, in Assisi, he heard a voice saying, "Francis, seest thou not that my house is in ruins? Go and restore it for me." Again it is said that this pointed to his great life-work of restoring spiritual power to the church, but he again accepted the message in a literal sense. Delighted to receive a command so specific, the kneeling Francis fervently responded, "With good will, Lord," and gladly entered upon the task of repairing the church of St. Damian. "Having fortified himself by the sign of the cross," he took a horse and a valuable bundle of goods belonging to his father and sold both at Falingo. Instead of turning the proceeds over to his father, Francis offered them to the priest of St. Damian, who, fearing the father's displeasure, refused to accept the stolen funds. The young zealot, "who had utter contempt for money," threw the gold on one of the windows of the church. Such is the story as gleaned from Catholic sources. The heretics, who have criticised Francis for this conduct, are answered by the following ingenious but dangerous sophistry: "It is certainly quite contrary to the ordinary law of justice for one man to take for himself the property of another; but if

Almighty God, to whom all things belong, and for whom we are only stewards, is pleased to dispense with this His own law in a particular case, and to bestow what He has hitherto given to one upon another, He confers at the same time a valid title to the gift, and it is no robbery in him who has received it to act upon that title."

Fearing his father's wrath, Francis hid himself in the priest's room, and contemporary authors assure us that when the irate parent entered, Francis was miraculously let into the wall. Wading (1731 A. D.) says the hollow place may still be seen in the wall.

After a month, the young hero, confident of his courage to face his father, came forth pale and weak, only to be stoned as a madman by the people. His father locked him up in the house, but the tenderer compassion of his mother released him from his bonds, and he found refuge with the priest. When his father demanded his return, Francis tore off his clothes and, as he flung the last rag at the feet of his astounded parent, he exclaimed: "Peter Bernardone was my father; I have but one father, He that is in Heaven." The crowd was deeply

moved, especially when they saw before them the hair shirt which Francis had secretly worn under his garments. Gathering up all that was left to him of his son, the father sadly departed, leaving the young enthusiast to fight his own way through the world. Many times after that, the parents, who tenderly watched over the lad in sickness and prayed for his recovery, saw their beloved son leading his barefooted beggars through the streets of his native town. But he will never more sing his gay songs underneath their roof or sally forth with his merry companions in search of pleasure. Francis was given a laborer's cloak, upon which he made the sign of a cross with some mortar, "thus manifesting what he wished to be, a half-naked poor one, and a crucified man." Such was the saint, in 1206, in his twenty-fifth year.

Francis now went forth, singing sacred songs, begging his food, and helping the sick and the poor. He was employed "in the vilest affairs of the scullery" in a neighboring monastery. At this time he clothed himself in the monk's dress, a short tunic, a leathern girdle, shoes and a staff. He waited upon lepers and kissed their disgusting

ulcers. Yet more, he instantly cured a dreadfully cancerous face by kissing it. He ate the most revolting messes, reproaching himself for recoiling in nausea. Thus the pauper of Jesus Christ conquered his pride and luxurious tastes.

Francis finally returned to repair the church of St. Damian. The people derided, even stoned him, but he had learned to rejoice in abuse. They did not know of what stern stuff their fellow-townsman was made. He bore all their insults meekly, and persevered in his work, carrying stones with his own hands and promising the blessing of God on all who helped him in his joyful task. His kindness and smiles melted hatred; derision turned to admiration. "Many were moved to tears," says his biographers, "while Francis worked on with cheerful simplicity, begging his materials, stone by stone, and singing psalms about the streets."

Two years after his conversion, or in 1208, while kneeling in the church of Sta. Maria dei Angeli, he heard the words of Christ: "Provide neither gold nor silver nor brass in your purses, neither two coats nor shoes nor staff, but go and preach." Afterwards, when the meaning of these words was

explained to him, he exclaimed: "This is what I seek for!" He threw away his wallet, took off his shoes, and replaced his leather girdle by a cord. His hermit's tunic appearing too delicate, he put on a coarse, gray robe, reaching to his feet, with sleeves that came down over his fingers; to this he added a hood, covering his head and face. Clothing of this character he wore to the end of his life. This was in 1208, which is regarded as the first year of the Order of St. Francis. The next year Francis gave this habit to those who had joined him.

So the first and chief of Franciscan friars, unattended by mortal companions, went humbly forth to proclaim the grandeur and goodness of a God, who, according to monastic teaching, demands penance and poverty of his creatures as the price of his highest favor and richest blessings. Nearly seven hundred long years have passed since that eventful day, but the begging Brothers of Francis still traverse those Italian highways over which the saint now journeyed with meek and joyous spirit.

> "He was not yet far distant from his rising
> Before he had begun to make the earth
> Some comfort from his mighty virtue feel.

For he in youth his father's wrath incurred
For certain Dame, to whom, as unto death,
The gate of pleasure no one doth unlock;
And was before his spiritual court
Et coram patre unto her united;
Then day by day more fervently he loved her.

. . . . . .

But that too darkly I may not proceed,
Francis and Poverty for these two lovers
Take thou henceforward in my speech diffuse."

—*Dante.*

In 1210, with eleven companions, his entire band, Francis went to Rome to secure papal sanction. Pope Innocent III. was walking in a garden of the Lateran Palace when a beggar, dusty and pale, confronted him. Provoked at being disturbed in his thoughts, he drove him away. That night it was the pope's turn to dream. He saw a falling church supported by a poor and miserable man. Of course, that man was Francis. Four or five years later the pope will dream the same thing again. Then the poor man will be Dominic. In the morning he sent for the monk whom he had driven from him as a madman the day before. Standing before his holiness and the college of cardinals, Francis pleaded his cause in a touching and eloquent

parable. His quiet, earnest manner and clear blue eyes impressed every one. The pope did not give him formal sanction however—this was left for Honorius III., November 29, 1223—but he verbally permitted him to establish his order and to continue his preaching.

Several times Francis set out to preach to the Mohammedans, but failed to reach his destination. He finally visited Egypt during the siege of Damietta, and at the risk of his life he went forth to preach to the sultan encamped on the Nile. He is described by an eye-witness "as an ignorant and simple man, beloved of God and men." His courage and personal magnetism won the Mohammedan's sympathy but not his soul. Although Francis courted martyrdom, and offered to walk through fire to prove the truth of his message, the Oriental took it all too good-naturedly to put him to the test, and dismissed him with kindness.

Francis was a great lover of birds. The swallows he called his sisters. A bird in the cage excited his deepest sympathy. It is said he sometimes preached to the feathered songsters.

Longfellow has cast one of these homilies into poetic form:

"O brother birds, St. Francis said,
Ye come to me and ask for bread,
But not with bread alone to-day
Shall ye be fed and sent away.

. . . . . .

Oh, doubly are ye bound to praise
The great Creator in your lays;
He giveth you your plumes of down,
Your crimson hoods, your cloaks of brown.

He giveth you your wings to fly
And breathe a purer air on high,
And careth for you everywhere,
Who for yourselves so little care."

Like all ascetics, Francis was tempted in visions. One cold night he fancied he was in a home of his own, with his wife and children around him. Rushing out of his cell he heaped up seven hills of snow to represent a wife, four sons and daughters, and two servants. "Make haste," he cried, "provide clothing for them lest they perish with the cold," and falling upon the imaginary group, he dispelled the vision of domestic bliss in the cold embrace of the winter's snow. Mrs. Oliphant points out the fact that,

unlike most of the hermits and monks, Francis dreams not of dancing girls, but of the pure love of a wife and the modest joys of a home and children. She beautifully says: "Had he, for one sweet, miserable moment, gone back to some old imagination and seen the unborn faces shine beside the never-lighted fire? But Francis does not say a word of any such trial going on in his heart. He dissipates the dream by the chill touch of the snow, by still nature hushing the fiery thoughts, by sudden action, so violent as to stir the blood in his veins; and then the curtain of prayer and silence falls over him, and the convent walls close black around."

The experience of the saint on Mount Alverno deserves special consideration, not merely on account of its singularity, but also because it affords a striking illustration of the difficulties one encounters in trying to get at the truth in monastic narratives. Francis had retired to Mount Alverno, a wild and rugged solitude, to meditate upon the Lord's passion. For days he had been almost distracted with grief and holy sympathy. Suddenly a seraph with six wings stood before

him. When the heavenly being departed, the marks of the Crucified One appeared upon the saint's body. St. Bonaventure says: "His feet and hands were seen to be perforated by nails in their middle; the heads of the nails, round and black, were on the inside of the hands, and on the upper parts of the feet; the points, which were rather long, and which came out on the opposite sides, were turned and raised above the flesh, from which they came out." There also appeared on his right side a red wound, which often oozed a sacred blood that stained his tunic.

This remarkable story has provoked considerable discussion. One's conclusions respecting its credibility will quite likely be determined by his general view of numerous similar narratives, and by the degree of his confidence in the value of human testimony touching such matters. The incongruities and palpable impostures that seriously impair the general reliability of monkish historians render it difficult to distinguish between the truths and errors in their writings.

Some authorities hold that the marks did not appear on St. Francis, and that the story is with-

out foundation. But Roman writers bring forward the three early biographers of Francis who claim that the marks did appear. Pope Alexander IV. publicly averred that he saw the wounds, and pronounced it heresy to doubt the report. Popes Benedict XI., Sixtus IV., and Sixtus V. consecrated and canonized the impressions by instituting a particular festival in their honor. Numerous persons are said to have seen the marks and to have kissed the nails, after the death of the saint. Singularly enough, the Dominicans were inclined to regard the story as a piece of imposture designed to exalt Francis above Dominic.

But, if it be admitted that the marks did appear, as it is not improbable, how shall the phenomenon be explained? At least four theories are held: 1. Fraud; 2. The irresponsible self-infliction of the wounds; 3. Physical effects due to mental suggestion or some other psychic cause; 4. Miracle.

1. The temptation is strong to claim a fraud, especially because the same witnesses who testify to the truth of the tale, also relate such mon-

strous, incredible stories, that one is almost forced to doubt either their integrity or their sanity. But there is no evidence in support of so serious an indictment. After showing that signs and portents attend every crisis in history, Mrs. Oliphant says: "Every great spiritual awakening has been accompanied by phenomena quite incomprehensible, which none but the vulgar mind can attribute to trickery and imposture;" but still she herself remains in doubt about the whole story.

2. Although Mosheim uses the term "fraud," it would seem that he means rather the irresponsible self-infliction of the wounds. He says: "As he [Francis] was a most superstitious and fanatical mortal, it is undoubtedly evident that he imprinted on himself the holy wounds. Paul's words, 'I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus,' may have suggested the idea of the fraud." The notion certainly prevailed that Francis was a sort of second Christ, and a book was circulated showing how he might be compared to Christ in forty particulars. There are many things in his biography which, if true, indicate that Francis yearned to imitate literally the experiences of his Lord.

3. Numerous experiments, conducted by scientific men, have established the fact that red marks, swellings, blisters, bleeding and wounds have been produced by mental suggestion. Björnstrom, in his work on "Hypnotism," after recounting various experiments showing the effect of the imagination on the body, says, respecting the *stigmata* of the Middle Ages: "Such marks can be produced by hypnotism without deceit and without the miracles of the higher powers." Prof. Fisher declares: "There is no room for the suspicion of deceit. The idea of a strange physical effect of an abnormal state is more plausible." Trench thinks this is a reasonable view in the case of a man like Francis, "with a temperament so irrepressible, of an organization so delicate, permeated through and through with the anguish of the Lord's sufferings, passionately and continually dwelling on the one circumstance of his crucifixion." But others, despairing of any rational solution, cut the Gordian knot and declare that "the kindest thing to think about Francis is that he was crazy."

4. Roman Catholics naturally reject all expla-

nations that exclude the supernatural, for, as Father Candide Chalippe affirms: "Catholics ought to be cautious in adopting anything coming from heretics; their opinions are almost always contagious." He therefore holds fast to the miracles in the lives of the saints, not only because he accepts the evidence, but because he believes these wonderful stories "add great resplendency to the merits of the saints, and, consequently, give great weight to the example they afford us."

It is altogether probable that each one will continue to view the whole affair as his predispositions and religious convictions direct; some unconvinced by traditionary evidence and undismayed by charges of heresy; others devoutly accepting every monkish miracle and marveling at the obstinacy of unbelief.

Two years after the event just described Francis was carried on a cot outside the walls of Assisi, where, lifting his hands he blessed his native city. Some few days later, on October 4, 1226, he passed away, exclaiming, "Welcome, Sister Death!"

Whatever we may think of the legends that

cluster about his life, Francis himself must not be held responsible for all that has been written about him. He himself was no phantom or mythical being, but a real, earnest man who, according to his light, tried to serve his generation. As he himself said: "A man is just so much and no more as he is in the sight of God." "Francis appears to me," says Forsyth, "a genuine, original hero, independent, magnanimous, incorruptible. His powers seemed designed to regenerate society; but taking a wrong direction, they sank men into beggars." Through the mist of tradition the holy beggar and saintly hero shines forth as a loving, gentle soul, unkind to none but himself. However his biography may be regarded, his life illustrates the beauty and power of voluntary renunciation,—the fountain not only of religion but of all true nobility of character. He may have been ignorant, perhaps grossly so, as Mosheim thinks, but nevertheless he merits our highest praise for striving honestly to keep his vow of poverty in the days when worldly monks disgraced their sacred profession by greed, ambition, and lustful indulgence.

The Franciscan Orders

The orders which Francis founded were of three classes:

1. Franciscan Friars or Order of Friars Minor, called also Gray or Begging Friars. The year in which Francis took the habit, 1208, is reckoned the first year of the order, but the Rule was not given until 1210.

This Rule, which has not been preserved, was very simple, and doubtless consisted of a group of gospel passages, bearing on the vow of poverty, together with a few precepts about the occupations of the brethren. The pope was not asked to sanction the Rule but only to give his approbation to the missions of the little band. Some of the cardinals expressed their doubts about the mode of life provided for in the rules. "But," replied Giovanni di San Paolo, "if we hold that to observe gospel perfection and make profession of it is an irrational and impossible innovation, are we not convicted of blasphemy against Christ, the Author of the Gospel?"

There was also the Rule of 1221, which makes an intermediate stage between the first Rule and that which was approved by the pope November 29, 1223. [The Rule of 1210 was thoroughly Franciscan. It was the expression of the passionate, fervent soul of Francis. It was the cry of the human heart for God and purity.] The Rule of 1223 shows that the church had begun to direct the movement. Sabatier says of these two rules: "At the bottom of it all is the antinome of law and love. Under the reign of law we are the mercenaries of God, bound down to an irksome task, but paid a hundred-fold, and with an indisputable right to our wages." Such was the conception underlying the Rule of 1223. That of 1210 is thus described: "Under the rule of love we are the sons of God, and co-workers with Him; we give ourselves to Him without bargaining and without expectation; we follow Jesus, not because this is well, but because we cannot do otherwise, because we feel that He has loved us and we love Him in our turn."

Francis would not allow his monks to be called Friars; he preferred Friars Minor or Little Brothers as a more humble designation.*

Ten years after the founding of the order, it is claimed, over five thousand friars assembled in Rome for the general chapter. The monks lodged in huts made of matting and hence this convention has been called the "Chapter of Mats." The order was strongest numerically about fifty years after the death of Francis, when it numbered eight thousand convents and two hundred thousand monks. Many of its members were highly distinguished, such as St. Bonaventura, Duns Scotus, Roger Bacon and Cardinal Ximenes.

2. Nuns of St. Clara or Poor Claras, dates from 1212, but it did not receive its rule from Francis until 1224. The order was founded in the following manner: Clara, a daughter of a noble family, was distinguished for her beauty and by her love for the poor. Francis often met her, and, in the language of his biographer, "exhorted her to a contempt of the world and poured into her ears the sweetness of Christ." Guided, no doubt, by his counsel, she stole one night from her home to a neighboring church where Francis and his beggars were assembled. Her long and beautiful hair was cut off, while a coarse woolen gown was

substituted for her own rich garments. Standing in the midst of the ragged monks, she renounced the dregs of Babylon and a wicked world, pledging her future to the monastic institution. Out from this little church into the darkness of the night, Francis led this beautiful girl of seventeen years and committed her to a Benedictine nunnery. Later on Clara became the abbess of a Franciscan convent at St. Damian, and the Sisterhood of St. Clara was established. It was an order of sadness and penitential tears. It is said that Clara never but once (when she received the blessing of the pope) lifted her eyelids so that the color of her eyes might be discerned.

3. The Third Order, called also "Brotherhood of Penitence," was composed of lay men and women. So many husbands and wives were desirous of leaving their homes in order to enter the monastic state, that Francis, not wishing to break up happy marriages, so it is said, was compelled to give these enthusiasts some sort of a rule by which they might compromise between their established life and the monastic career. This state of things led to the formation, in

1221, of the Third Order of St. Francis, or the Order of Tertiaries, in relation to the Friars Minor and the Poor Claras. Sabatier says this generally-accepted date is wrong; that it is impossible to fix any date, for that which came to be known as the Third Order was born of the enthusiasm excited by the preaching of Francis soon after his return from Rome in 1210. Candidates for admission into this order were required to make profession of all the orthodox truths, special care being employed to guard against the intrusion of heretics. Days of fasting and abstinence were enjoined, and members were urged to avoid profanity, the theater, dancing and law-suits. The order met with astonishing success, cardinals, bishops, emperors, empresses, kings and queens, gladly enrolling themselves among the followers of St. Francis.

Dominic de Guzman, 1170–1221 *A. D.*

Half-way between Osma and Aranda in Old Castile, Spain, is a little village known as "the fortunate Calahorra." Here was the castle of the

Guzmans, where Dominic was born. His family was of high rank and character, a noble house of warriors, statesmen and saints. If we accept the legends, his greatness was foreshadowed. Before his birth, his mother dreamed she saw her son under the figure of a black-and-white dog, with a torch in his mouth. "A true dream," says Milman, "for he will scent out heresy and apply the torch to the faggots;" but, as will be seen later, this observation does not rest on undisputed evidence.

In the year 1191, when Spain was desolated by a terrible famine, Dominic was just finishing his theological studies. He gave away his money and sold his clothes, his furniture and even his precious manuscripts, that he might relieve distress. When his companions expressed astonishment that he should sell his books, Dominic replied: "Would you have me study off these dead skins, when men are dying of hunger?" This noble utterance is cherished by his admirers as the first saying from his lips that has passed to posterity.

Dominic was educated in the schools of Palen-

cia, afterwards a university, where he devoted six years to the arts and four to theology. In 1194, when twenty-five years of age, Dominic became a canon regular, at Osma, under the rule of St. Augustine. Nine years after he accompanied his bishop, Don Diego, on an embassy for the king of Castile. When they crossed the Pyrenees they found themselves in an atmosphere of heresy. The country was filled with preachers of strange doctrines, who had little respect for Dominic, his bishop, or their Roman pontiff. The experiences of this journey inspired in Dominic a desire to aid in the extermination of heresy. He was also deeply impressed by an important and significant observation. Many of these heretical preachers were not ignorant fanatics, but well-trained and cultured men. Entire communities seemed to be possessed by a desire for knowledge and for righteousness. Dominic clearly perceived that only preachers of a high order, capable of advancing reasonable argument, could overthrow the Albigensian heresy.

It would be impossible, in a few words, to tell the whole story of this Albigensian movement.

Undoubtedly the term stood for a variety of theological opinions, all of which were in opposition to the teachings of Rome. "From the very invectives of their enemies," says Hallam, "and the acts of the Inquisition, it is manifest that almost every shade of heterodoxy was found among these dissidents, till it vanished in a simple protestation against the wealth and tyranny of the clergy." Many of the tenets of these enthusiasts were undoubtedly borrowed from the ancient Manicheism, and would be pronounced heretical by every modern evangelical denomination. But associated with those holding such doctrines were numerous reformers, whose chief offense consisted in their incipient Protestantism. However heretical any of these sects may have been, it is impossible to make them out enemies to the social order, except as all opponents of established religious traditions create disturbance. "What these bodies held in common," says Hardwick, "and what made them equally the prey of the inquisitor, was their unwavering belief in the corruption of the mediæval church, especially as governed by the Roman pontiffs."

In 1208 Dominic visited Languedoc a second time, and on his way he encountered the papal legates returning in pomp to Rome, foiled in their attempt to crush this growing schism. To them he administered his famous rebuke: "It is not the display of power and pomp, cavalcades of retainers, and richly-houseled palfreys, or by gorgeous apparel, that the heretics win proselytes; it is by zealous preaching, by apostolic humility, by austerity, by seeming, it is true, but by seeming holiness. Zeal must be met by zeal, humility by humility, false sanctity by real sanctity, preaching falsehood by preaching truth." It is extremely unfortunate for the reputation of Dominic that he ever departed from the spirit of these noble words, which so clearly state the conditions of true religious progress.

Dominic now gathered about him a few men of like spirit and began his task of preaching down heresy. But "the enticing words of man's wisdom" failed to win the Albigensians from what they believed to be the words of God. So, unmindful of his admonition to the papal legates, Dominic obtained permission of Innocent III. to

hold courts, before which he might summon all persons suspected of heresy. When eloquence and courts failed, the pope let loose the "dogs of war." Then followed twenty years of frightful carnage, during which hundreds of thousands of heretics were slain, and many cities were laid waste by fire and sword. "This was to punish a fanaticism," says Hallam, "ten thousand times more innocent than their own, and errors which, according to the worst imputations, left the laws of humanity and the peace of social life unimpaired." Peace was concluded in 1229, but the persecution of heretics went on.

What part Dominic personally had in these bloody proceedings is litigated history. His admirers strive to rescue his memory from the charge that he was "a cruel and bloody man." It is argued that while the pope and temporal princes carried on the sanguinary war against the heretics, Dominic confined himself to pleading with them in a spirit of true Christian love. He was a minister of mercy, not an avenging angel, sword in hand. It has to be conceded that the constant tradition of the Dominican

order that Dominic was the first Inquisitor, whether he bore the title or not, rests upon good authority. But what was the nature of the office as held by the saint? As far as Dominic was concerned, it is argued by his friends that the office "was limited to the *reconciliation* of heretics and had nothing to do with their *punishment*." It is also claimed that while Dominic did impose penances, in some cases public flagellation, no evidence can be produced showing that he ever delivered one heretic to the flames. Those who were burned were condemned by secular courts, and on the ground that they were not only heretics but enemies of the public peace and perpetrators of enormous crimes.

But while it may not be proved that Dominic himself passed the sentence of death or applied the torch to the faggots with his own hand, he is by no means absolved from all complicity in those frightful slaughters, or from all responsibility for the subsequent establishment of the Holy Inquisition. The principles governing the Inquisition were practically those upon which Dominic proceeded; the germs of the later atrocities are

to be found in his aims and methods. By what a narrow margin does Dominic escape the charge of cruelty when it is boasted "that he resolutely insisted on no sentence being carried out until all means had been tried by which the conversion of a prisoner could be effected." Another statement also contains an inkling of a significant fact, namely, that secular judges and princes were constantly under the influence of the monks and other ecclesiastical persons, who incited them to wage war, and to massacre, in the Albigensian war as in other crusades against heresy. No word from Dominic can be produced indicating that he remonstrated with the pope, or that he tried to stop the crusade. In a few instances he seems to have interceded with the crazed soldiery for the lives of women and children. But he did not oppose the bloody crusade itself. He was constantly either with the army or following in its wake. He often sat on the bench at the trial of dissenters. He remained the life-long friend of Simon de Montfort, the cruel agent of the papacy, and he blessed the marriage of his sons and baptized his daughter. Special courts for trying heretics were established,

previous to the more complete organization of the Inquisition, and in these he held a commission.

The Holy Office of the Inquisition was made a permanent tribunal by Gregory IX., in 1233, twelve years after the death of Dominic, and curiously enough, in the same year in which he was canonized. The Catholic Bollandists claim that although the *title* of Inquisitor was of later date than Dominic, yet the *office* was in existence, and that the splendor of the Holy Inquisition owes its beginning to that saint. Certain it is that the administration of the Inquisition was mainly in the hands of Dominican monks.

In view of all these facts, Professor Allen is justified in his conclusions respecting Dominic and his share in the persecution of heretics: "Whatever his own sweet and heavenly spirit according to Catholic eulogists, his name is a synonym of bleak and intolerant fanaticism. It is fatally associated with the blackest horrors of the crusade against the Albigenses, as well as with the infernal skill and deadly machinery of the Inquisition."

In 1214, Dominic established himself, with six followers, in the house of Peter Cellani, a rich resi-

dent of Toulouse. Eleven years of active and public life had passed since the Subprior of Osma had forsaken the quietude of the monastery. He now resumed his life of retirement and subjected himself and his companions to the monastic rules of prayer and penance. But the restless spirit of the man could not long remain content with the seclusion and inactivity of a monk's life. The scheme of establishing an order of Preaching Friars began to assume definite shape in his mind. He dreamed of seven stars enlightening the world, which represented himself and his six friends. The final result of his deliberations was the organization of his order, and the appearance of Dominic in the city of Rome, in 1215, to secure the approval of the pope, Innocent III. Although some describe his reception as "most cordial and flattering," yet it required supernatural interference to induce the pope to grant even his approval of the new order. It was not formally confirmed until 1216 by Honorius III.

Dominic now made his headquarters at Rome, although he traveled extensively in the interests of his growing brotherhood of monks. He was made

Master of the Sacred Palace, an important official post, including among its functions the censorship of the press. It has ever since been occupied by members of the Dominican order.

Throughout his life Dominic is said to have zealously practiced rigorous self-denial. He wore a hair shirt, and an iron chain around his loins, which he never laid aside, even in sleep. He abstained from meat and observed stated fasts and periods of silence. He selected the worst accommodations and the meanest clothes, and never allowed himself the luxury of a bed. When traveling, he beguiled the journey with spiritual instruction and prayers. As soon as he passed the limits of towns and villages, he took off his shoes, and, however sharp the stones or thorns, he trudged on his way barefooted. Rain and other discomforts elicited from his lips nothing but praises to God.

Death came at the age of fifty-one and found him exhausted with the austerities and labors of his eventful career. He had reached the convent of St. Nicholas, at Bologna, weary and sick with a fever. He refused the repose of a bed and bade the monks lay him on some sacking stretched upon

the ground. The brief time that remained to him was spent in exhorting his followers to have charity, to guard their humility, and to make their treasure out of poverty. Lying in ashes upon the floor he passed away at noon, on the sixth of August, 1221. He was canonized by Gregory IX., in 1234.

The Dominican Orders

The origin of the Order of the Preaching Friars has already been described. It is not necessary to dwell upon the constitution of this order, because in all essential respects it was like that of the Franciscans. The order is ruled by a general and is divided into provinces, governed by provincials. The head of each house is called a prior. Dominic adopted the rules laid down by St. Augustine, because the pope ordered him to follow some one of the older monastic codes, but he also added regulations of his own.

Soon after the founding of the order, bands of monks were sent out to Paris, to Rome, to Spain and to England, for the purpose of planting colonies in the chief seats of learning. The order produced

many eminent scholars, some of whom were Thomas Aquinas, Albertus Magnus, Echard, Tauler and Savonarola.

As among the Franciscans, there was also an Order of Nuns, founded in 1206, and a Third Order, called the Militia of Jesus Christ, which was organized in 1218.

The Success of the Mendicant Orders

In 1215, Innocent III. being pope, the Lateran council passed the following law: "Whereas the excessive diversity of these [monastic] institutions begets confusion, no new foundations of this sort must be formed for the future; but whoever wishes to become a monk must attach himself to some of the already existing rules." This same pope approved the two Mendicant orders, urging them, it is true, to unite themselves to one of the older orders; but, nevertheless, they became distinct organizations, eclipsing all previous societies in their achievements. The reason for this disregard of the Lateran decree is doubtless to be found in the alarming condition of religious affairs at that time,

and in the hope held out to Rome by the Mendicants, of reforming the monasteries and crushing the heretics.

The failure of the numerous and varied efforts to reform the monastic institution and the danger to the church arising from the unwonted stress laid upon poverty by different schismatic religious societies, necessitated the adoption of radical measures by the church to preserve its influence. At this juncture the Mendicant friars appeared. The conditions demanded a modification of the monastic principle which had hitherto exalted a life of retirement. Seclusion in the cloister was no longer possible in the view of the remarkable changes in religious thought and practice.

Innocent III. was wise enough to perceive the immediate utility of the new societies based upon claims to extraordinary humility and poverty. The Mendicant orders were, in themselves, not only a rebuke to the luxurious indolence and shameful laxity of the older orders, but when sanctioned by the church, the existence of the new societies attested Rome's desire to maintain the highest and the purest standards of monastic life. Hence,

the Preaching Friars were permitted to reproach the clergy and the monks for their vices and corruptions.

"The effect of such a band of missionaries," says John Stuart Mill, "must have been great in rousing and feeding dormant devotional feelings. They were not less influential in regulating those feelings, and turning into the established Catholic channels those vagaries of private enthusiasm which might well endanger the church, since they already threatened society itself."

Two novel monastic features, therefore, now appear for the first time: 1. The substitution of itineracy for the seclusion of the cloister; and 2. The abolition of endowments.

1. The older orders had their traveling missionaries, but the general practice was to remain shut up within the monastic walls. The Mendicants at the start had no particular abiding place, but were bound to travel everywhere, preaching and teaching. It was distinctly the mission of these monks to visit the camps, the towns, cities and villages, the market places, the universities, the homes and the churches, to preach and to minister to the sick and

the poor. They neither loved the seclusion of the cell nor sought it. Theirs to tramp the dusty roads, with their capacious bags, begging and teaching. Only by this itinerant method could the people be reached and the preachers of heresy be encountered.

2. One of the chief sources of strength in the heretical sects was the justness of their attack upon the Catholic monastic orders, whose immense riches belied their vows of poverty. The heretics practiced austerities and adopted a simplicity of life that won the hearts of the people, by reason of its contrast to the loose habits of the monks and clergy. Since it was impossible to reform the older orders, it became absolutely essential to the success of the Mendicants that they should rigorously respect the neglected discipline. As the abuse of the vow of poverty was particularly common, the Mendicants naturally emphasized this vow.

While it is true that a begging monk was by no means unknown, yet now, for the first time, was the practice of mendicity formally adopted by entire orders. Owing to the excessive multiplication of mendicant societies, Pope Gregory X., at a general

council held at Lyons in 1272, attempted to check the growing evil. The number of Mendicant orders was confined to four, viz., the Dominicans, the Franciscans, the Carmelites and the Augustinians or Hermits of Augustine. The Council of Trent confined mendicity to the Observantines and Capuchins, since the other societies had practically abandoned their original interpretation of their vow of poverty and had acquired permanent property.

When Francis tried to enforce the rule of poverty, his rigor gave rise to most serious dissensions, which began in his own lifetime and ended after his death in open schism. Some of his followers were not pleased with his views on that subject. They resisted his extreme strictness, and after his death they continued to advocate the holding of property. The popes tried to settle the quarrel, but ever and anon it broke out afresh with volcanic fierceness. They finally interpreted the rule of poverty to mean that the friars could not hold property in their own names, but they might enjoy its use. Under this interpretation of the rule, the beggars soon became very rich. Matthew of Paris said: "The friars who have been founded hardly forty years have built even

in the present day in England residences as lofty as the palaces of our kings." But the better element among the Franciscans refused to consent to such a palpable evasion of the rule. A portion of this class separated themselves from the Franciscans, rejected their authority, and formed a new sect called the *Fratricelli*, or Little Brothers. It is very important to keep the history of this name clearly in mind, for it frequently appears in the Reformation period and has been the cause of much misunderstanding. The word "Fratricelli" came to be a term of derision applied to any one affecting the dress or the habits of the monks. When heretical sects arose, it was applied to them as a stigma, but it was used first by a sect of rigid Franciscans who deserted their order, adopted this name as their own, and exulted in its use. The quarrel among the monks led to a variety of complications and is intricately interwoven with the political and religious history of the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. "These rebellious Franciscans," says Mosheim, "though fanatical and superstitious in some respects, deserve an eminent rank among those who prepared the way for the Reformation in

Europe, and who excited in the minds of the people a just aversion to Rome."

The Mendicants were especially active in educational work. This is to be attributed to several causes. Unquestionably the general and increasing interest in theological doctrines and the craving for knowledge affected the monastic orders. Europe was just arousing from her medieval slumbers. The faint rays of the Reformation dawn were streaking the horizon. The intellect as well as the conscience was touched by the Spirit of God. The revolt against moral iniquity was often accompanied by skepticism concerning the authority and dogmas of the church. Questions were being asked that ignorant monks could not answer. Too long had the church ignored these symptoms of the approach of a new order of things. The church was forced to meet the heretics on their own ground, to offset the example of their simplicity and purity of life by exalting the neglected standards of self-denial, and to silence them, if possible, by exposing their errors. Then came the Franciscans, with their austere simplicity and their insistence upon poverty. Then also appeared the Dominicans, or as they were

called, "The Watch-dogs of the Church," who not only barked the church awake, but tried to devour the heretics.

Francis halted for some time before giving encouragement to educational enterprises. A life of devotion and prayer attracted him, because, as he said, "Prayer purifies the affections, strengthens us in virtue, and unites us to the sovereign good." But, he went on, "Preaching renders the feet of the spiritual man dusty; it is an employment which dissipates and distracts, and which causes regular discipline to be relaxed." After consulting Brother Sylvester and Sister Clara, he decided to adopt their counsel and entered upon a ministry of preaching. The example and success of the Dominicans probably inspired the Franciscans to give themselves more and more to intellectual work.

Both orders received appointments in all the leading universities, but they did not gain this ascendency without a severe conflict. The regular professors and the clergy were jealous of them for various causes, and resisted them at every point. The quarrel between the Dominicans and the University of Paris is the most famous of these

struggles. It began in 1228 and did not end until 1259. The Dominicans claimed the right to two theological professorships. One had been taken from them, and a law was passed that no religious order should have what these friars demanded. The Dominicans rebelled and the University passed sentences of expulsion. Innocent IV., wishing to become master of Italy, sided with the University, but the next month he was dead,—in answer to their prayers, said the Dominicans, but rumor hinted an even blacker cause. The thirty-one years of the struggle dragged wearily on, disturbed by papal bulls, appeals, pamphlets and university slogans. At last Alexander IV., in 1255, decided that the Dominicans might have the second professorship and also any other they thought proper. The noise of conflict now grew louder and boded ill for the peace of the church. The pulpits flashed forth fiery utterances. The monks were assailed in every quarter. William of Amour published his essay on "The Perils of the Last Times," in which he claimed that the perilous times predicted by the Apostle Paul were now fulfilled by these begging friars. He exposed their iniquities and bitterly

complained of their arrogance and vice. His book was burned and its author banished. Although meaning to be a friend of Rome, he unconsciously contributed his share to the coming reform. In 1259, Rome thundered so loud that all Europe was terrified and the University was awed into submission.

Another interesting feature in the history of their educational enterprises is the entrance of the Mendicants into England, where they acted a leading part in the educational and political history of the country. The Dominicans settled first at Oxford, in 1221. The Franciscans, after a short stay at Canterbury, went to Oxford in 1224. The story of how the two Gray friars journeyed from Canterbury to Oxford runs as follows: "These two forerunners of a famous brotherhood, being not far from Oxford, lost their way and came to a farmhouse of the Benedictines. It was nearly night and raining. They gently knocked, and asked admittance for God's sake. The porter gazed on their patched robes and beggarly aspect and supposed them to be mimics or despised persons. The prior, pleased with the tidings, invited them in. But instead of

sportively performing, these two friars insisted, with sedate countenances, that they were men of God. Whereat the Benedictines in jealousy, and displeased to be cheated out of their expected fun, kicked and buffeted the two poor monks and turned them out of doors. One young monk pitied them and smuggled them into a hay-loft where we trust they slept soundly and safe from the cold and rain." The two friars finally reached Oxford and were well received by their Dominican brothers. Such was the simple beginning of a brilliant career that was profoundly to affect the course of English history. Both at Cambridge and Oxford the monastic orders exercised a remarkable influence. Traces of their labors and power may still be seen in the names of the colleges, and in the religious portions of the university discipline. They built fine edifices and manned their schools with the best teachers, so that they became great rivals of the regular colleges which did not have the funds necessary to compete with these wealthy beggars. Another cause of their rapid progress was the exodus of students from Paris to England. During the quarrel at Paris, Henry III. of England offered many inducements to the

students, who left for England in large numbers. Many of them were prejudiced in favor of the friars, and they naturally drifted to the monastic college. The secular clergy charged the friars with inducing the college students to enter the monasteries or to turn begging monks. The pope, the king, and the parliament became involved in the struggle, which grew more bitter as the years passed. After a while Wyclif appeared, and when he began his mighty attack upon the friars the joy with which the professors viewed the struggle can be appreciated.

The Decline of the Mendicants

The Mendicant friars won their fame by faithful and earnest labors. Men admired them because they identified themselves with the lowest of mankind and heroically devoted themselves to the poor and sick. These "sturdy beggars," as Francis called his companions, were contrasted with the lazy, rich, and, too often, licentious monks of the other orders. Everywhere the friars were received with veneration and joy. The people sought burial in

their rags, believing that, clothed in the garments of these holy beggars, they would enter paradise more speedily.

Instead of seeking the seclusion of the convent to save his own soul, the friar displayed remarkable zeal trying to save mankind. He became the arbiter in the quarrels of princes, the prime mover in treaties between nations, and the indispensable counselor in political complications. The pope employed him as his authorized agent in the most difficult matters touching the welfare of the church. His influence upon the common people is thus described by the historian Green: "The theory of government wrought out in the cell and lecture-room was carried over the length and breadth of the land by the Mendicant brother begging his way from town to town, chatting with the farmer or housewife at the cottage door and setting up his portable pulpit in village green or market-place. The rudest countryman learned the tale of a king's oppression or a patriot's hope as he listened to the rambling, passionate, humorous discourse of the beggar friar."

By these methods the Mendicants were enabled

to render most efficient service to their patrons at Rome in their efforts to establish their temporal power. They were, in fact, before the Reformation, just what the Jesuits afterwards became, "the very soul of the hierarchy." Yes, they were immensely, prodigiously successful. The popes hastened to do them honor. Because the friars were such enthusiastic supporters of the church, the popes poured gold and privileges into their capacious coffers. Thankful peasants threw in their mites and the admiring noble bestowed his estates.

The secular clergy, with envy and chagrin, awoke to the alarming fact that the beggars had won the hearts of the people; their hatred was increased by the fact that when the Roman pontiffs enriched these indefatigable toilers and valiant foes of heresy, they did so at the expense of the bishops and clergy, which, perhaps, was robbing Paul to pay Peter.

Baluzii says: "No religious order had the distribution of so many and such ample indulgences as the Franciscans. In place of fixed revenues, lucrative indulgences were placed in their hands." So ill-judged was the distribution of these favors that discipline was overturned. Many churchmen, feel-

ing that their rights were being encroached upon, complained bitterly, and resolved on retaliation. It is just here that a potent cause of the Mendicant's fall is to be found. He helped to dig his own grave.

Having elevated monasticism to the zenith of its power, the Mendicant orders, like all the other monastic brotherhoods, entered upon their shameful decline. The unexampled prosperity, so inconsistent with the original intentions of the founders of the orders, was attended by corruptions and excesses. The decrees of councils, the denunciations of popes and high ecclesiastical dignitaries, the satires of literature, the testimony of chroniclers and the formation of reformatory orders, constitute a body of irrefragable evidence proving that the lowest level of sensuality, superstition and ignorance had been reached. The monks and friars lost whatever vigor and piety they ever possessed.

It is again evident that a monk cannot serve God and mammon. Success ruins him. Wealth and popular favor change his character. The people slowly realize the fact that the fat and lazy medieval monk is not dead, after all, but

has simply changed his name to that of Begging Friar. As Allen neatly observes: "Their gray gown and knotted cord wrapped a spiritual pride and capacity of bigotry, fully equal to the rest."

Here, then, are the "sturdy beggars" of Francis, dwelling in palatial convents, arrogant and proud, trampling their ideal into the dust. Thus it came to pass in accordance with the principle stated at the beginning of this chapter, that when the ideal became a cloak to cover up sham, decay had set in, and ruin, even though delayed for years, was sure to come. The poor, sad-faced, honest, faithful friar everybody praised, loved and reverenced. The insolent, contemptuous, rich monk all men loathed. So a change of character in the friar transformed the songs of praise into shouts of condemnation. Those golden rays from the morning sun of the Reformation are ascending toward the highest heaven, and daybreak is near.

VI

THE SOCIETY OF JESUS

IN MANY RESPECTS it would be perfectly proper to consider the Mendicant orders as the last stage in the evolution of the monastic institution. Although the Jesuitical system rests upon the three vows of poverty, celibacy and obedience, yet the ascetic principle is reduced to a minimum in that society. Father Thomas E. Sherman, the son of the famous general, and a Jesuit of distinguished ability, has declared: "We are not, as some seem to think, a semi-military band of men, like the Templars of the Middle Ages. We are not a monastic order, seeking happiness in lonely withdrawal from our fellows. Our enemies within and without the church would like to make us monks, for then we would be comparatively useless, since that is not our end or aim. . . . We are regulars in the army of Christ;

that is, men vowed to poverty, chastity and obedience; we are a collegiate body with the right to teach granted by the Catholic church." *

The early religious orders were based upon the idea of retirement from the world for the purpose of acquiring holiness. But as has already been shown, the constant tendency of the religious communities was toward participation in the world's affairs. This tendency became very marked among the friars, who traveled from place to place, and occupied important university positions, and it reaches its culmination in the Society of Jesus. Retirement among the Jesuits is employed merely as a preparation for active life. Constant intercourse with society was provided for in the constitution of the order. Bishop John J. Keane, a Roman Catholic authority, says: "The clerks regular, instituted principally since the sixteenth century, were neither monks nor friars, but priests living in common and busied with the work of the ministry. The Society of Jesus is one of the orders of clerks regular."

Other differences between the monastic commu-

*Appendix, Note G.

nities and the Jesuits are to be observed. The Jesuit discards the monastic gown, and is decidedly averse to the old monastic asceticism, with its rigorous and painful treatment of the body. While the older religious societies were essentially democratic in spirit and government, the monks sharing in the control of the monastic property and participating in the election of superiors, the Jesuitical system is intensely monarchical, a despotism pure and simple. In the older orders, the welfare of the individual was jealously guarded and his sanctification was sought. Among the Jesuits the individual is nothing, the corporate body everything. Admission to the monastic orders was encouraged and easily obtained. The novitiate of the Jesuits is long and difficult. Access to the highest grades of the order is granted only to those who have served the society many weary years.

But in spite of such variations from the old monastic type, the Society of Jesus would doubtless never have appeared, had not the way for its existence been paved by previous monastic societies. Its aims and its methods were the natural sequence of monastic history. They were merely a develop-

IGNATIUS DE LOYOLA

AFTER GREATBACH'S ENGRAVING FROM THE

ment of past experiences, for the objects of the society were practically the objects of the Mendicants; the vows were the same with a change of emphasis. The abandonment of austerities as a means of salvation or spiritual power was the natural fruit of past experiments that had proved the uselessness of asceticism merely for the sake of acquiring a spirit of self-denial. The extirpation of heresy undertaken by Ignatius had already been attempted by the friars, while the education of the young had long been carried on with considerable success by the Benedictine and Dominican monks. The spirit of its founder, however, gave the Society of Jesus a unique character, and monasticism now passed out from the cell forever. The Jesuit may fairly be regarded as a monk, unlike any of his predecessors but nevertheless the legitimate fruit of centuries of monastic experience.

Ignatius de Loyola, 1491–1556 *A. D.*

Inigo Lopez de Recalde, or Loyola, as he is commonly known, was born at Guipuzcoa, in Spain, in 1491. He was educated as a page in the court

of Ferdinand the Catholic. He afterwards became a soldier and led a very wild life until his twenty-ninth year. During the siege of Pamplona, in 1521, he was severely wounded, and while convalescing he was given lives of Christ and of the saints to read. His perusal of these stories of spiritual combat inspired a determination to imitate the glorious achievements of the saints. For a while the thirst for military renown and an attraction toward a lady of the court, restrained his spiritual impulses. But overcoming these obstacles, he resolutely entered upon his new career.

Sometime after he visited the sanctuary of Montserrat, where he hung his shield and sword upon the altar of the Virgin Mary and gave his oath of fealty to the service of God. A tablet, erected by the abbot of the monastery in commemoration of this event, reads as follows: "Here, blessed Ignatius of Loyola, with many prayers and tears, devoted himself to God and the Virgin. Here, as with spiritual arms, he fortified himself in sackcloth, and spent the vigil of the night. Hence he went forth to found the Society of Jesus, in the year MDXXII."

After spending ten months in Manresa, Loyola went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, intending to remain there, but he was sent home by the Eastern monks, and reached Italy in 1524.

Now began his struggle for an education. At the age of thirty-three he took his seat on the school-bench at Barcelona. In 1526 he entered the University at Alcala. He was here looked upon as a dangerous innovator, and was imprisoned six weeks, by order of the Inquisition, for preaching without authority, since he was not in holy orders. After his release he attended the University of Salamanca, but he finally took his degree of Master of Arts at the University of Paris, in 1533.

During this period he was several times imprisoned as a dangerous fanatic, but each time he succeeded in securing a verdict in his favor. The hostility to Ignatius and his work forms a strange parallel to the bitter antagonism which his society has always encountered.

Nine men, among whom was Francis Xavier, afterwards widely renowned, had been chosen with great care, as the companions of Ignatius. He called them together in July, 1534, and on August

15th of the same year he selected six of them and bade them follow him to the Church of the Blessed Virgin, at Montmartre, in Paris. There and then they bound themselves to renounce all their goods, and to make a voyage to Jerusalem, in order to convert the Eastern infidels; if that scheme proved impracticable, they agreed to offer themselves to the sovereign pontiff for any service he might require of them. War prevented the journey to the Holy Land, and so, after passing through a variety of experiences, Ignatius and his companions met at Rome, to secure the sanction of Pope Paul III. for the new society. After a year and a half of deliberation and discussion a favorable decision was reached, which was, no doubt, partly facilitated by the growth of the Reformation. The new society was chartered on September 27, 1540, for the "defence and advance of the faith."

Ignatius was elected as the general of the order and entered upon his duties, April 17, 1541. He soon prepared a constitution which was not adopted until after his death, and then in an amended form. Loyola ended his remarkable and stormy career, July 31, 1556.

Constitution and Polity of the Order

The *Institutum*, which contains the governing laws of the society, is a complex document consisting of papal bulls and decrees, a list of the privileges which have been granted to the order, ten chapters of rules, decrees of the general congregations, the plan of studies (*ratio studiorum*), and three ascetic writings, of which the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius constitute the chief part.

The society is distributed into six grades: novices, scholastics, temporal coadjutors, spiritual coadjutors, professed of the three vows, and professed of the four vows.

The professed form only a small percentage of the entire body, and constitute a sort of religious aristocracy, from which the officers of the society are selected. Only the professed of the fourth vow, who add to the three vows a pledge of unconditional obedience to the pope, possess the full rights of membership. This final grade cannot be reached until the age of forty-five, so that if the candidate enters the order at the earliest age per-

missible, fourteen, he has been on probation thirty-one years when he reaches the final grade.

The society is ruled by a general, to whom unconditional obedience is required. The provinces, into which the order is divided, are governed by provincials, who must report monthly to the general. The heads of all houses and colleges must report weekly to their provincials. An elaborate system of checks and espionage is employed to ensure the perfect working of this complex ecclesiastical machinery. Fraud or evasion is carefully guarded against, and every possible means is employed to enable the general to keep himself fully informed concerning the minutest details of the society's affairs.

The Vow of Obedience

That which has imparted a peculiar character to the Jesuit and contributed more than any other force to his success, is the insistence upon unquestioning submission to the will of the superior. This emphasis on the vow of obedience deserves, therefore, special consideration. Loyola, in his

"Spiritual Exercises," commanded the novice to preserve his freedom of mind, but it is difficult for the fairest critic to conceive of such a possibility in the light of Loyola's rule of obedience, which reads: "I ought not to be my own, but His who created me, and his too by whose means God governs me, yielding myself to be moulded in his hands like so much wax. . . . I ought to be like a corpse, which has neither will nor understanding, or like a small crucifix, which is turned about at the will of him who holds it, or like a staff in the hands of an old man, who uses it as may best assist or please him."

As an example of the kind of obedience demanded of the Jesuit, Loyola cited the obedience of Abraham, who, when he believed that Jehovah commanded him to commit the crime of infanticide, was ready to obey. The thirteenth of the rules appended to the Spiritual Exercises says: "If the Church shall have defined that to be black which to our eyes appears white, we ought to pronounce the thing in question black."

Loyola is reported as having said to his secretary that "in those who offer themselves he looked less

to purely natural goodness than to firmness of character and ability for business." But that he did not mean *independent* firmness of character is clearly seen in the obvious attempt of the order to destroy that noble and true independence which is the crowning glory of a lofty character. The discipline is marvelously contrived to "scoop the will" out of the individual. Count Paul von Hoensbroech, who recently seceded from the society, has set forth his reasons for so doing in two articles which appeared in the "Preussische Jahrbücher." A most interesting discussion of these articles, in the "New World," for December, 1894, places the opinions of the Count at our disposal. It is quite evident that he is no passionate, blind foe of the society. His tone is temperate and his praises cordially given. While recognizing the genius shown in the machinery of the society and the nobility of the real aims of the Jesuitical discipline, and while protesting against the unfounded charges of impurity, and other gross calumnies against the order, Count Paul nevertheless maintains that it "rests on so unworthy a depreciation of individuality, and so exaggerated an apprehension of the

virtue of obedience, as to render it unfit for its higher ends." The uniform of the Jesuit is not an external garb, but such freedom is insignificant in the light of the "veritable strait-jacket," which is placed upon the inward man. The unformed and pliable novice, usually between the ages of sixteen and twenty, is subjected to "a skillful, energetic and unremitting assault upon personal independence." Every device that a shrewd and powerful intellect could conceive of is employed to break up the personal will. "The Jesuit scheme prescribes the gait, the way to hold the hands, to incline the head, to direct the eyes, to hold and move the person."

Every novice must go through the "Spiritual Exercises" in complete solitude, twice in his life. They occupy thirty days. The "Account of the Conscience" is of the very essence of Jesuitism. The ordinary confession, familiar to every Catholic, is as nothing compared with this marvelous inquiry into the secrets of the human heart and mind. Every fault, sin, virtue, wish, design, act and thought,—good, bad or indifferent,—must be disclosed, and this revelation of the inner life may be used against him who makes it, "for the good of

the order." Thus, after fifteen years of such ingenious and detailed discipline, the young man's intellectual and moral faculties are moulded into Jesuitical forms. He is no longer his own. He is a pliable and obedient, even though it may be a virtuous and brilliant, tool of a spiritual master-mechanic who will use him according to his own purposes, in the interest of the society.

The Jesuits have signally failed to convince the world that the type of character produced by their system is worthy of admiration. The "sacrifice of the intellect"—a familiar watchword of the Jesuit—is far too high a price to pay for whatever benefits the discipline may confer. It is contrary to human nature, and hence to the divine intention, to keep a human soul in a state of subordination to another human will. As Von Hoensbroech says of the society: "Who gave it a right to break down that most precious possession of the individual being, which God gave, and which man has no authority to take away?"

It is true that no human organization has so magnificently brought to perfection a unity of purpose and oneness of will. It is also true that a

spirit of defiance toward human authority is often accompanied by a disobedience of divine law. But the remedy for the abuses of human freedom is neither in the annihilation of the will itself, nor in its mere subjection to some other will irrespective of its moral character. Carlyle may have been too vehement in some of his censures of Jesuitism, but he certainly exposed the fallaciousness of Loyola's views concerning the value of mere obedience, at the same time justly rebuking the too ardent admirers of the perverted principle: "I hear much also of 'obedience,' how that and kindred virtues are prescribed and exemplified by Jesuitism; the truth of which, and the merit of which, far be it from me to deny. . . . Obedience is good and indispensable: but if it be obedience to what is wrong and false, good heavens, there is no name for such a depth of human cowardice and calamity, spurned everlastingly by the gods. Loyalty? Will you be loyal to Beelzebub? Will you 'make a covenant with Death and Hell'? I will not be loyal to Beelzebub; I will become a nomadic Choctaw rather, . . . anything and everything is venial to that."

The Casuistry of the Jesuits

It is often asserted, even by authoritative writers, that a Jesuit is bound by his vows to commit either venial or mortal sin at the command of his superior; and that the maxim, "The end justifies the means," has not only been the principle upon which the society has prosecuted its work but is also explicitly taught in the rules of the order. There is nothing in the constitution of the society to justify these two serious charges, which are not to be regarded as malicious calumnies, however, because the slovenly Latin in one of the rules on obedience has misled such competent scholars as John Addington Symonds and the historian Ranke. Furthermore, judging from the doctrines of the society as set forth by many of their theologians and the political conduct of its representatives, the conclusion seems inevitable that while the society may not teach in its rules that its members are bound to obedience even to the point of sin, yet practically many of its leaders have so held and its emissaries have rendered that kind of obedience.

Bishop Keane admits that one of the causes for the decline and overthrow of the society was its marked tendency toward lax moral teaching. There can be but little doubt that the Jesuits have ever been indulgent toward many forms of sin and even crime, when committed under certain circumstances and for the good of the order or "the greater glory of God."

To enable the reader to form some sort of an independent judgment on this question, it is necessary to say a few words on the subject of casuistry and the doctrine of probabilism.

Casuistry is the application of general moral rules to given cases, especially to doubtful ones. The medieval churchmen were much given to inventing fanciful moral distinctions and to prescribing rules to govern supposable problems of conscience. They were not willing to trust the individual conscience or to encourage personal responsibility. The individual was taught to lean his whole weight on his spiritual adviser, in other words, to make the conscience of the church his own. As a result there grew up a confused mass of precepts to guide the perplexed conscience. The Jesuits carried this

system to its farthest extreme. As Charles C. Starbuck says: "They have heaped possibility upon possibility in their endeavors to make out how far there can be subjective innocence in objective error, until they have, in more than one fundamental point, hopelessly confused their own perceptions of both." *

The doctrine of probabilism is founded upon the distinctions between opinions that are sure, less sure, or more sure. There are several schools of probabilists, but the doctrine itself practically amounts to this: Since uncertainty attaches to many of our decisions in moral affairs, one must follow the more probable rule, but not always, cases often arising when it is permissible to follow a rule contrary to the more probable one. Furthermore, as the Jesuits made war upon individual authority, which was the key-note of the Reformation, and contended for the authority of the church, the teaching naturally followed, that the opinion of "a grave doctor" may be looked upon "as possessing a fair amount of probability, and may, therefore, be safely followed, even though one's conscience insist

*Appendix, Note H.

upon the opposite course." It is easy to see that this opens a convenient door to those who are seeking justification for conduct which their consciences condemn. No doubt one can find plausible excuses for the basest crimes, if he stills the voice of conscience and trusts himself to confusing sophistry. The glory of God, the gravity of circumstances, necessity, the good of the church or of the order, and numerous other practical reasons can be urged to remove scruples and make a bad act seem to be a good one. But crime, even "for the glory of God," is crime still.

This disagreeable subject will not be pursued further. To say less than has been said would be to ignore one of the most prominent causes of the Jesuits' ruin. To say more than this, even though the facts might warrant it, would incur the liability of being classed among those malicious fomentors of religious strife, for whom the writer has mingled feelings of pity and contempt. The Society of Jesus is not the Roman Catholic Church, which has suffered much from the burden of Jesuitism—wounds that are scarcely atoned for by the meritorious and self-sacrificing services on her behalf in

other directions. The Protestant foes have never equaled the Catholic opponents of Jesuitism, either in their fierce hatred of the system or in their ability to expose its essential weakness. A writer in the "Quarterly Review," September, 1848, says: "Admiration and detestation of the Jesuits divide, as far as feeling is concerned, the Roman Catholic world, with a schism deeper and more implacable than any which arrays Protestant against Protestant."

The Mission of the Jesuits

The Society of Jesus has been described as "a naked sword, whose hilt is at Rome, and whose point is everywhere." It is an undisputed historical fact that Loyola's consuming passion was to accomplish the ruin of Protestantism, which had twenty years the start of him and was threatening the very existence of the Roman hierarchy. It has already been shown that the destruction of heresy was the chief aim of the Dominicans. What the friars failed to attain, Loyola attempted. The principal object of the Jesuits was the maintenance of papal authority. Even to-day the Jesuit does

not hesitate to declare that his mission is to overthrow Protestantism. The Reformation was inspired by a new conception of individual freedom. The authority of tradition and of the church was set at naught. Loyola planted his system upon the doctrine of absolute submission to authority. The partial success of the Jesuits, for they did beat back the Reformation, is no doubt attributable to their fidelity, virtue and learning. Their devotion to the cause they loved, their willingness to sacrifice life itself, their marvelous and instantaneous obedience to the slightest command of their leaders, made them a compact and powerful papal army. Their methods, in many particulars, were not beyond question, and, whatever their character, the order certainly incurred the fiercest hostility of every nation in Europe, and even of the church itself.

Professor Anton Gindely, in his "History of the Thirty Years' War," shows that Maximilian, of Bavaria, and Ferdinand, of Austria, the leaders on the Catholic side, were educated by Jesuits. He also fixes the responsibility for that war partly upon them in the plainest terms: "In a word, they had the consciences of Roman Catholic sovereigns and

their ministers in their hands as educators, and in their keeping as confessors. They led them in the direction of war, so that it was at the time, and has since been called the Jesuits' War."

The strictures of Carlyle, Macaulay, Thackeray, and Lytton have been repeatedly denounced by the Jesuits, but even their shrewd, sophistical defences of their order afford ample justification for the attitude of their foes. For example, in a masterful oration, previously quoted from, in which the virtues of the Jesuits are extolled and defended, Father Sherman says: "We are expelled and driven from pillar to post because we teach men to love God." He describes Loyola as "the knightly, the loyal, the true, the father of heroes, and the maker of saints, the lover of the all-good and the all-beautiful, crowned with the honor of sainthood, the best-loved and the best-hated man in all the world, save only his Master and ours." "'Twas he that conceived the daring plan of forging the weapon to beat back the Reformation." No one but a Jesuit could reconcile the aim of "preaching the love of God" with "beating back the Reformation," especially in view of the methods employed.

Numerous gross calumnies have been circulated against the Society of Jesus. The dread of a return to that deplorable intellectual and moral slavery of the pre-Reformation days is so intense, that a calm, dispassionate consideration of Jesuit history is almost impossible. But after all just concessions have been made, two indisputable facts confront the student: first, the universal antagonism to the order, of the church that gave birth to it, as well as of the states that have suffered from its meddling in political affairs; and second, the complete failure of the order's most cherished schemes. France, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, Great Britain and other nations, have been compelled in sheer self-defence to expel it from their territories. Such a significant fact needs some other explanation than that the Jesuit has incurred the enmity of the world merely for preaching the love of God.

Clement XIV., when solemnly pronouncing the dissolution of the order, at the time his celebrated bull, entitled "*Dominus ac Redemptor Noster*," which was signed July 21, 1773, was made public, justified his action in the following terms: "Recognizing that the members of this society have not a

little troubled the Christian commonwealth, and that for the welfare of Christendom it were better that the order should disappear," etc. When Rome thus delivers her *ex cathedra* opinion concerning her own order, an institution which she knows better than any one else, one cannot fairly be charged with prejudice and sectarianism in speaking evil of it.

But while there is much to be detested in the methods of the order, history does not furnish another example of such self-abnegation and intense zeal as the Jesuits have shown in the prosecution of their aims. They planted missions in Japan, China, Africa, Ceylon, Madagascar, North and South America.

In Europe the Mendicant friars by their coarseness had disgusted the upper classes; the affable and cultured Jesuit won their hearts. The Jesuits became chaplains in noble families, learned the secrets of every government in Europe, and became the best schoolmasters in the age. They were to be found in various disguises in every castle of note and in every palace. "There was no region of the globe," says Macaulay, "no walk of speculative or

active life in which Jesuits were not to be found." That they were devoted to their cause no one can deny. They were careless of life and, as one facetiously adds, of truth also. They educated, heard confessions, plotted crimes and revolutions, and published whole libraries. Worn out by fatigue, the Jesuits still toiled on with marvelous zeal. Though hated and opposed, they wore serene and cheerful countenances. In a word, they had learned to control every faculty and every passion, and to merge every human aspiration and personal ambition into the one supreme purpose of conquering an opposing faith and exalting the power of priestly authority. They hold up before the subjects of the King of Heaven a wonderful example of loving and untiring service, which should be emulated by every servant of Christ who too often yields an indifferent obedience to Him whom he professes to love and to serve.

Francis Parkman, in his brilliant narrative of "The Jesuits in North America," presents the following interesting contrast between the Puritan and the Jesuit: "To the mind of the Puritan, heaven was God's throne; but no less was the earth His

footstool; and each in its degree and its kind had its demands on man. He held it a duty to labor and to multiply; and, building on the Old Testament quite as much as on the New, thought that a reward on earth as well as in heaven awaited those who were faithful to the law. Doubtless, such a belief is widely open to abuse, and it would be folly to pretend that it escaped abuse in New England; but there was in it an element manly, healthful and invigorating. On the other hand, those who shaped the character, and in a great measure the destiny, of New France had always on their lips the nothingness and the vanity of life. For them, time was nothing but a preparation for eternity, and the highest virtue consisted in a renunciation of all the cares, toils and interests of earth. That such a doctrine has often been joined to an intense worldliness, all history proclaims; but with this we have at present nothing to do. If all mankind acted on it in good faith, the world would sink into decrepitude. It is the monastic idea carried into the wide field of active life, and is like the error of those who, in their zeal to cultivate their higher nature, suffer the neglected body to dwindle and pine, till

body and mind alike lapse into feebleness and disease."

Notwithstanding the success of the Jesuits in stopping the progress of the Reformation, it may be truthfully said that they have failed. The principles of the Reformation dominate the world and are slowly modifying the Roman church in America. "In truth," says Macaulay, "if society continued to hold together, if life and property enjoyed any security, it was because common sense and common humanity restrained men from doing what the order of Jesus assured them they might with a safe conscience do." Our hope for the future progress of society lies in the guiding power of this same common sense and common humanity.

The restoration of the order by Pius VII., August 7th, 1814, while it renewed the papal favor, did not allay the hostility of the civil powers. Various states have expelled them since that time, and wherever they labor, they are still the objects of open attack or ill-disguised suspicion. Although the order still shows "some quivering in fingers and toes," as Carlyle expresses it, the principles of the Reformation are too widely believed, and its bene-

VII

THE FALL OF THE MONASTERIES

THE RISE of Protestantism accelerated the decline and final ruin of the monasteries. The enthusiasm of the Mendicants and the culture of the Jesuits failed to convince the governments of Europe that monasticism was worthy to survive the destruction awaiting so many medieval institutions. The spread of reformatory opinions resulted in a determined and largely successful attack upon the monasteries, which were rightly believed to constitute the bulwark of papal power. So imperative were the popular demands for a change, that popes and councils hastened to urge the members of religious orders to abolish existing abuses by enforcing primitive rules. But while Rome practically failed in her attempted reformations, the Protestant reformers in church and state were widely successful in either

curtailing the privileges and revenues of the monks or in annihilating the monasteries.

Since the sixteenth century the leading governments of Europe, even including those in Catholic countries, have given tangible expression to popular and political antagonism to monasticism, by the abolition of convents, or the withdrawal of immunities and favors, for a long time a source of monastic revenue and power. The results of this hostility have been so disastrous that monasticism has never regained its former prestige and influence. Several of the older orders have risen from the ruins, and a few new communities have appeared, some of which are distinguished by their most laudable ministrations to the poor and the sick, or by their educational services. Yet notwithstanding the modifications of the system to suit the exigencies of modern times, it seems altogether improbable that the monks will ever again wield the power they possessed before the Reformation.

In the present chapter attention will be confined to the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII., in England. The suppression in that country was occasioned partly by peculiar, local condi-

tions, and was more radical and permanent than the reforms in other lands, yet it is entirely consistent with our general purpose to restrict this narrative to English history. Penetrating beneath the varying externalities attending the ruin of the monasteries in Germany, Spain, France, Switzerland, Italy, and other countries, it will be found that the underlying cause of the destruction of the monasteries was that the monastic ideal conflicted with the spirit of the modern era. A conspicuous and dramatic example of this struggle between medievalism, as embodied in the monastic institution, and modern political, social and religious ideals, is to be found in the dissolution of the English monasteries. The narrative of the suppression in England also conveys some idea of the struggle that was carried on throughout Europe, with varying intensity and results.

There is no more striking illustration of the power of the personal equation in the interpretation of history than that afforded by the conflicting opinions respecting the overthrow of monasticism in England. Those who mourn the loss of the monasteries cannot find words strong enough with which to condemn Henry VIII., whom they regard

as "unquestionably the most unconstitutional, the most vicious king that ever wore the English crown." Forgetting the inevitable cost of human freedom, and lightly passing over the iniquities of the monastic system, they fondly dwell upon the departed glory of the ancient abbeys. They recall with sadness the days when the monks chanted their songs of praise in the chapels, or reverently bent over their books of parchment, bound in purple and gold, not that they might "winnow the treasures of knowledge, but that they might elicit love, compunction and devotion." The charming simplicity and loving service of the cloister life, in the days of its unbroken vows, appeal to such defenders of the monks with singular potency.

Truly, the fair-minded should attempt to appreciate the sorrow, the indignation and the love of these friends of a ruined institution. Passionless logic will never enable one to do justice to the sentiments of those who cannot restrain their tears as they stand uncovered before the majestic remains of a Melrose Abbey, or properly to estimate the motives and methods of those who laid the mighty monastic institution in the dust.

The Character of Henry VIII

Before considering the actual work of suppression, it may be interesting to glance at the royal destroyer and his times. The character of Henry VIII. is utterly inexplicable to many persons, chiefly because they do not reflect that even the inconsistencies of a great man may be understood when seen in the light of his times. A masterly and comprehensive summary of the virtues and vices of the Tudor monarch, who has been described as "the king, the whole king, and nothing but the king," may be found in "A History of Crime in England," by Luke Owen Pike. The distinguished author shows that in his brutality, his love of letters, his opposition to Luther, his vacillation in religious opinions, King Henry reflects with remarkable fidelity the age in which he lived, both in its contrasts and its inconsistencies. "It is only the previous history of England which can explain all the contradictions exhibited in his conduct,—which can explain how he could be rapacious yet sometimes generous, the Defender of the Faith yet

under sentence of excommunication, a burner of heretics yet a heretic himself, the pope's advocate yet the pope's greatest enemy, a bloodthirsty tyrant yet the best friend to liberty of thought in religion, an enthusiast yet a turncoat, a libertine and yet all but a Puritan. He was sensual because his forefathers had been sensual from time immemorial, rough in speech and action because there had been but few men in Britain who had been otherwise since the Romans abandoned the island. He was superstitious and credulous because few were philosophical or gifted with intellectual courage. Yet he had, what was possessed by his contemporaries, a faint and intermittent thirst for knowledge, of which he himself hardly knew the meaning." Henry was shrewd, tenacious of purpose, capricious and versatile. In spite of his unrestrained indulgences and his monstrous claims of power, which, be it remembered, he was able to enforce, and notwithstanding any other vices or faults that may be truthfully charged against him, he was, on the whole, a popular king. Few monarchs have ever had to bear such a strain as was placed upon his abilities and character. Rare have been the periods that have

witnessed such confusion of principles, social, political and religious. Those were the days when liberty was at work, "but in a hundred fantastical and repulsive shapes, confused and convulsive, multiform, deformed." Blind violence and half-way reforms characterized the age because the principles that were to govern modern times were not yet formulated.

Judged apart from his times Henry appears as an arrogant, cruel and fickle ruler, whose virtues fail to atone for his vices. But still, with all his faults, he compares favorably with preceding monarchs and even with his contemporaries. If he had possessed less intelligence, courage and ambition, he would not now be so conspicuous for his vices, but the history of human liberty and free institutions, especially in England, would have been vastly different. His praiseworthy traits were not sufficiently strong to enable him to control his inherited passions, but they were too regnant to permit him to submit without a struggle to the hierarchy which had dominated his country so many centuries. Such was

"the majestic lord,
That broke the bonds of Rome."

Events Preceding the Suppression

Many causes and incidents contributed to the progress of the reformation in England, and to the demolition of the monasteries. Only a few of them can be given here, and they must be stated with a brevity that conveys no adequate conception of their profound significance.

Henry VIII. ascended the throne, in the year 1509, when eighteen years of age. In 1517, Luther took his stand against Rome. Four years later Henry wrote a treatise in defence of the Seven Sacraments and in opposition to the German reformer. For this princely service to the church the king received the title "Defender of the Faith" from Pope Leo X.

About 1527 it became known that Henry was questioning the validity of his marriage with Catharine of Aragon, whom he had married when he was twelve years old. She was the widow of his brother Arthur. The king professed conscientious scruples about his marriage, but undoubtedly his desire for male offspring, and later, his passion

for Anne Boleyn, prompted him to seek release from his queen. In 1529, Henry and Catharine stood before a papal tribunal, presided over by Cardinal Wolsey, the king's prime minister, and Cardinal Campeggio, from Rome, for the purpose of determining the validity of the royal marriage. The trial was a farce. The enraged king laid the blame upon Wolsey, and retired him from office. The great cardinal was afterwards charged with treason, but died broken-hearted, on his way to the Tower, November 29, 1530.

The breach between Henry and Rome, complicated by numerous international intrigues, widened rapidly. Henry began to assume an attitude of bold defiance toward the pope, which aroused the animosity of the Catholic princes of Europe.

Notwithstanding the desire of a large body of the English people to remain faithful to Rome, the dangers which menaced their country from abroad and the ecclesiastical abuses at home, which had been a fruitful cause for complaint for many years, tended to lessen the ancient horror of heresy and schism, and inclined them to support their king. Another factor that assisted in preparing the English

people for the destruction of the monasteries was Lollardism. As an organized sect, the Lollards had ceased to exist, but the spirit and the doctrines of Wyclif did not die. A real and a vital connection existed between the Lollards of the fourteenth, and the reformers of the sixteenth, centuries. In Henry's time, many Englishmen held practically the same views of Rome and of the monks that had been taught by Wyclif.*

A considerable number of Henry's subjects, however, while ostensibly loyal to him, were inwardly full of hot rebellion. The king was surrounded with perils. The princes of the Continent were eagerly awaiting the bull for his excommunication. Henry's throne and his kingdom might at any moment be given over by the pope to invasion by the continental sovereigns.

Reginald Pole, afterwards cardinal, a cousin of the king, and a strong Catholic, stood ready to betray the interests of his country to Rome. Writing to the king, he said: "Man is against you; God is against you; the universe is against you; what can you look for but destruction?" "Dream not,

*Appendix, Note I.

Cæsar," he encouragingly declared to Emperor Charles V., "that all generous hearts are quenched in England; that faith and piety are dead. In you is their trust, in your noble nature, and in your zeal for God—they hold their land till you shall come." Thus, on the testimony of a Roman Catholic, there were traitors in England waiting only for the call of Charles V., "To arms!" Pole was in full sympathy with all the factions opposed to the king, and stood ready to aid them in their resistance. He publicly denounced the king in several continental countries.

The monks were especially enraged against Henry. They did all they could to inflame the people by preaching against him and the reformers. Friar Peyto, preaching before the king, had the assurance to say to him: "Many lying prophets have deceived you, but I, as a true Micah, warn you that the dogs will lick your blood as they did Ahab's." While the courage of this friar is unquestioned, his defiant attitude illustrates the position occupied by the monks toward those who favored separation from Rome. The whole country was at white heat. The friends of Rome looked upon

Henry as an incarnate fiend, a servant of the devil and an enemy of all religion. Many of them opposed him with the purest and best motives, believing that the king was really undermining the church of God and throwing society into chaos.

In 1531, the English clergy were coerced into declaring that Henry was "the protector and the supreme head of the church and of the clergy of England," which absurd claim was slightly modified by the words, "in so far as is permitted by the law of Christ." Chapuys, in one of his despatches informing Charles V. of this action of convocation, said that it practically declared Henry the Pope of England. "It is true," he wrote, "that the clergy have added to the declaration that they did so only so far as permitted by the law of God. But that is all the same, as far as the king is concerned, as if they had made no reservation, for no one will now be so bold as to contest with his lord the importance of the reservation." Later on, Chapuys says that the king told the pope's nuncio that "if the pope would not show him more consideration, he would show the world that the pope had no greater authority than Moses, and that every claim

not grounded on Scripture was mere usurpation; that the great concourse of people present had come solely and exclusively to request him to bastinado the clergy, who were hated by both nobles and the people." ("Spanish Despatches," number 460.)

Parliament, in 1534, conferred on Henry the title "Supreme Head of the Church of England," and empowered him "to visit, and repress, redress, reform, order, correct, restrain, or amend all errors, heresies, abuses, offences, contempts, and enormities, which fell under any spiritual authority or jurisdiction." The "Act of Succession" was also passed by Parliament, cutting off Princess Mary and requiring all subjects to take an oath of allegiance to Elizabeth.

It was now an act of treason to deny the king's supremacy. All persons suspected of disloyalty were required to sign an oath of allegiance to Henry, and to Elizabeth as his successor, and to acknowledge the supremacy of the king in church and state. This resulted in the death of some prominent men in the realm, among them Sir Thomas More. In the preamble of the oath prescribed by law, the legality of the king's marriage

with Anne was asserted, thus implying that his former marriage with Catharine was unlawful. More was willing to declare his allegiance to the infant Elizabeth, as the king's successor, but his conscience would not permit him to affirm that Catharine's marriage was unlawful.

The life of the brilliant and lovable More is another illustration of the mental confusions and inconsistencies of that age. As an apostle of culture he favored the new learning, and yet he viewed the gathering momentum of reformatory principles with alarm, and cast in his lot with the ultra-conservatives. Four years of his young manhood were spent in a monastery. He devoted his splendid talents to a criticism of English society, and recommended freedom of conscience, yet he became an ardent foe of reform and even a persecutor of heretics, of whom he said: "I do so detest that class of men that, unless they repent, I am the worst enemy they have." When a man, whom even Protestant historians hasten to pronounce "the glory of his age," so magnificent were his talents and so blameless his character, was tainted with superstition, and sanctioned the persecution of liberal thinkers,

is it remarkable that inferior intellects should have been swayed by the brutality and tyranny of the times?

The unparalleled claims of Henry and his attitude toward the pope made the breach between England and Rome complete, but many years of painful internal strife and bloodshed were to elapse before the whole nation submitted to the new order of things, and before that subjective freedom from fear and superstition without which formal freedom has little value, was secured.

The breach with Rome was essential to the attainment of that religious and political freedom that England now enjoys. But the first step toward making that separation an accomplished fact, acquiesced in by the people as a whole, was to break the power of the monastic orders. It may possibly be true that the same ends would have been eventually attained by trusting to the slower processes of social evolution, but the history of the Latin nations of Europe would seem to prove the contrary. As the facts stand it would appear that peace and progress were impossible with thousands of monks sowing seeds of discord, and employing every measure, fair

or foul, to win the country back to Rome. Gairdner and others argue that Henry was far too powerful a king to have been successfully resisted by the pope, unless the pope was backed by a union of the Christian princes, which was then impracticable. That fact may make the execution of More, Fisher and the Charterhouse monks inexcusable, but it by no means proves that Henry would have been strong enough to maintain his position if the monasteries had been permitted to exist as centers of organized opposition to his will. Many of the monks, when pressed by the king's agents, took the oath of allegiance. Threats, bribes and violence were used to overcome the opposition of the unwilling.

The Monks and the Oath of Supremacy

It is quite evident that the king's purpose to destroy the whole monastic institution was partly the result of the determined resistance which the monks offered to his authority. The contest between the king and the monks was exceedingly fierce and bloody. Many good men lost their lives and many innocent persons suffered grievously.

Perhaps the most pathetic incident in the sanguinary struggle between the king and the monks was the tragic fall of the Charterhouse of London. The facts are given at length by Froude, in his "History of England," who bases his account on the narrative of Maurice Channey, one of the monks who escaped death by yielding to the king. The unhappy monk confesses that he was a Judas among the apostles, and in a touching account of the ruin that came upon his monastic retreat he praises the boldness and fidelity of his companions, who preferred death to what seemed to them dishonor.

The pages of Channey are filled with the most improbable stories of miracles, but his charming picture of the cloister life of the Carthusians is doubtless true to reality. The Carthusian fathers were the best fruit of monasticism in England. To a higher degree than any of the other monastic orders they maintained a good discipline and preserved the spirit of their founders. "A thousand years of the world's history had rolled by," says Froude, "and these lonely islands of prayer had remained still anchored in the stream; the strands of the ropes which held them, wearing now to a

thread, and very near their last parting, but still unbroken." In view of the undisputed purity and fearlessness of these noble monks, a recital of their woes will place the case for the monastic institution in the most favorable light.

Channey says the year 1533 was ushered in with signs,—the end of the world was nigh. Yes, the monk's world was drawing to a close; the moon, for him, was turning into blood, and the stars falling from heaven.

More and Fisher were in the Tower. The former's splendid talents and noble character still swayed the people. It was no time for trifling; the Carthusian fathers must take the oath of allegiance or perish. So one morning the royal commissioners appeared before the monastery door of the Charterhouse to demand submission. Prior Houghton answered them: "I know nothing of the matter mentioned; I am unacquainted with the world without; my office is to minister to God, and to save poor souls from Satan." He was committed to the Tower for one month. Then Dr. Bonner persuaded the prior to sign with "certain reservations." He was released and went back to his cloister-cell to weep.

Calling his monks together he said he was sorry; it looked like deceit, but he desired to save his brethren and their order. The commissioners returned; the monks were under suspicion; the reservations were disliked, and they must sign without conditions. In great consternation the prior assembled the monks. All present cried out: "Let us die together in our integrity, and heaven and earth shall witness for us how unjustly we are cut off." Prior Houghton conceived a generous idea. "If it depends on me alone; if my oath will suffice for the house, I will throw myself on the mercy of God; I will make myself anathema, and to preserve you from these dangers, I will consent to the king's will." Thus did the noble old man consent to go into heaven with a lie on his conscience, hoping to escape by the mercy of God, because he sought to save the lives of his brethren. But all this was of no avail; Cromwell had determined that this monastery must fall, and fall it did. The monks prepared for their end calmly and nobly; beginning with the oldest brother, they knelt before each other and begged forgiveness for all unkindness and offence. "Not less deserving," says Froude, "the everlasting remem-

brance of mankind, than those three hundred, who, in the summer morning, sate combing their golden hair in the passes of Thermopylæ." But rebellion was blazing in Ireland, and the enemies of the king were praying and plotting for his ruin. These monks, with More and Fisher, were an inspiration to the enemies of liberty and the kingdom. Catholic Europe crouched like a tiger ready to spring on her prostrate foe. It is sad, but these recluses, praying for the pope, instilling a love for the papacy in the confessional, these honest and conscientious but dangerous men must be shorn of their power to encourage rebels. There was a farce of a trial. Houghton was brought to the scaffold and died protesting his innocence. His arm was cut off and hung over the archway of the Charterhouse, as other arms and heads were hideously hanging over many a monastic gate in Merry England. Nine of the monks died of prison fever, and others were banished. The king's court went into mourning, and Henry knotted his beard and henceforth would be no more shaven—eloquent evidence to the world that whatever motive dominated the king's heart, these bloody deeds were unpleasantly

disturbing. Certainly such a spectacle as that of a monk's arm nailed to a monastery was never seen by Englishmen before.

The Charterhouse fell, let it be carefully noted, because the monks could not and would not acknowledge the king's supremacy, and not because the monks were immoral. Some spies in Cromwell's service offered to bring in evidence against six of these monks of "laziness and immorality." Cromwell indignantly refused the proposal, saying, "He would not hear the accusation; that it was false, wilfully so."

The news of these proceedings, and of the beheading of More and Fisher, awakened the most violent rage throughout Catholic Europe. Henry was denounced as the Nero of his times. Paul III. immediately excommunicated the king, dissolved all leagues between Henry and the Catholic princes, and gave his kingdom to any invader. All Catholic subjects were ordered to take up arms against him. Although these censures were passed, the pope decided to defer their publication, hoping for a peaceful settlement. But Henry knew, and the Catholic princes of Europe

knew, that the blow might fall at any time. He had to make up his mind to go further or to yield unconditionally to the pope. The world soon discovered the temper of the enraged and stubborn monarch. He might vacillate on speculative questions, but there were no tokens of feeble hesitancy in his dealings with Rome. The hour of doom for the monasteries had struck.

Having thus glanced at the character of Henry VIII., the prime mover in the attack upon the monasteries, and having surveyed some of the events leading up to their fall, we are now prepared to consider the actual work of suppression, which will be described under the following heads: First, The royal commissioners and their methods of investigation; Second, The commissioners' report on the condition of affairs; Third, The action of Parliament; Fourth, The effect of the suppression upon the people; and Fifth, The use Henry made of the monastic possessions. These matters having been set forth, it will then be in order to inquire into the justification, real or alleged, of the suppression.

The Royal Commissioners and Their Methods of Investigation

The fall of Sir Thomas More left Thomas Cromwell the chief power under the king, and for seven years he devoted his great administrative abilities to making his royal patron absolute ruler in church and state.

Cromwell, Earl of Essex, was of lowly origin, but his energy and shrewdness, together with the experience acquired by extensive travels, commanded the attention of Cardinal Wolsey, who took him into his service. He was successively merchant, scrivener, money-lender, lawyer, member of parliament, master of jewels, chancellor, master of rolls, secretary of state, vicar-general in ecclesiastical affairs, lord privy seal, dean of Wells and high chamberlain.

Close intimacy with Wolsey enabled Cromwell to grasp the full significance of Henry's ambition, and his desire to please his royal master, coupled with his own love of power, prompted him to throw himself with characteristic energy into the

work of centralizing all authority in the hands of the king and of his prime minister. In secular affairs, this had already been accomplished. The task before him was to subdue the church to the throne, to execute which he became the protector of Protestantism and the foe of Rome. Green says: "He had an absolute faith in the end he was pursuing, and he simply hews his way to it, as a woodman hews his way through the forest, axe in hand." Froude says: "To him ever belonged the rare privilege of genius to see what other men could not see, and therefore he was condemned to rule a generation which hated him, to do the will of God and to perish in his success. He pursued an object, the excellence of which, as his mind saw it, transcended all other considerations, the freedom of England and the destruction of idolatry, and those who, from any motive, noble or base, pious or impious, crossed his path, he crushed and passed on over their bodies."

There seems to be a general agreement that Cromwell was not a Protestant. His struggle against the temporal power of the pope fostered

the reformatory movement, but that did not make Cromwell a Protestant any more than it did his master, Henry VIII. Foxe describes Cromwell "as a valiant soldier and captain of Christ," but Maitland retorts "that Foxe forgot, if he ever knew, who was the father of lies."

Without doubt Cromwell ruled with an iron hand. He was guilty of accepting bribes, and, as some maintain, "was the great patron of ribaldry, and the protector of the low jester and the filthy." But, sadly enough, that is no serious charge against one in his times. It is said that Henry used to say, when a knave was dealt to him in a game of cards, "Ah, I have a Cromwell!" Francis Aidan Gasquet, a Benedictine monk, in his valuable work on "Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries," says of Cromwell: "No single minister in England ever exercised such extensive authority, none ever rose so rapidly, and no one has ever left behind him a name covered with greater infamy and disgrace."

In 1535, Henry, as supreme head of the church, appointed Cromwell as his "Vicegerent, Vicar-General and Principal Commissary in causes

ecclesiastical." His immediate duty was to enforce recognition of the king's supremacy. The monks and the clergy were now to be coerced into submission. A royal commission, consisting of Legh, Layton, Ap Rice, London and various subordinates, was appointed to visit the monasteries and to report on their condition.

Henry Griffin says in his chronicle: "I was well acquainted with all the commissioners; indeed I knew them well; they were very smart men, who understood the value of money, for they had tasted of adversity. I think the priests were the worst of the whole party, although they had a good reputation at the time, but they were wicked, deceitful men. I am sorry to speak thus of my own order, but I speak God's truth." "It is a dreadful undertaking," said Lord Clinton. "Ah! but I have great faith in the tact and judgment of the men I am about to select," retorted Cromwell.

Dr. John London was a base tool of Cromwell, and a miserable exponent of the reform movement. He joined Gardiner in burning heretics, was convicted of adultery at Oxford, was pilloried for

perjury and died in jail. The other royal agents were also questionable characters. Dean Layton wrote the most disgusting letters to Cromwell. Once he informed his patron that he prayed regularly for him, prefacing this information with the remark, "I will now tell you something to make you laugh."

Father Gasquet sums up his view of the commissioners in the words of Edmund Burke: "It is not with much credulity that I listen to any when they speak ill of those whom they are going to plunder. I rather suspect that vices are feigned, or exaggerated, when profit is looked for in the punishment—an enemy is a bad witness; a robber worse." Burke indignantly declares: "The inquiry into the moral character of the religious houses was a mere pretext, a complete delusion, an insidious and predetermined foray of wholesale and heartless plunder."

Such are the protests from the defenders of the monasteries even before a hearing is granted. "What," say they, "believe such perjurers, adulterers and gamblers; men forsworn to bring in a bad report; men who were selected because they

were worthless characters who could be relied on to return false charges against an institution loved by the people?"

The commissioners began their work at Oxford, in September, 1535. The work was vigorously pushed. On reaching the door of a monastery, they demanded admittance; if it was not granted, they entered by breaking down the gate with an axe. They then summoned the monks before them, and plied them with questions. An inventory was taken of everything; nothing escaped their searching eyes. When the king decided to suppress the lesser monasteries, and ordered a new visitation of the larger ones, they seized and sold all they could lay their hands on; "stained glass, ironwork, bells, altar-cloths, candles, books, beads, images, capes, brewing-tubs, brass bolts, spits for cooking, kitchen utensils, plates, basins, all were turned into money." Many valuable books were destroyed; jewels and gold and silver clasps were torn from old volumes, and the paper sold as waste; parchment manuscripts were used to scour tubs and grease boots. Out of the wreck about a hundred and thirty thousand manuscripts

have been saved. It must be admitted that the commissioners were not delicate in their labors; that they insulted many nuns, robbed the monks, violated the laws of decency and humanity, and needlessly excited the rage of the people and outraged the religious sentiments of the Catholics. They even used sacred altar-cloths for blankets on their horses, and rode across the country decorated in priestly and monkish garments. There seems to be some ground for the statement that Henry was ignorant, or at least not fully informed, of their unwarranted violence and gross sacrilege.

The abbey of Glastonbury was one of the oldest and finest cloisters in England. It was a majestic pile of buildings in the midst of gardens and groves covering sixty acres; its aisles were vocal with the chanting of monks, who marched in gorgeous processions among the tall, gray pillars. The exterior of the buildings was profusely decorated with sculpture; monarchs, temple knights, mitered abbots, martyrs and apostles stood for centuries in their niches of stone while princes came and passed away, while kingdoms rose and fell. The nobles and bishops of the realm were

laid to rest beneath the altars around which many generations of monks had assembled to praise and to pray. The royal commissioners one day appeared before the walls. The abbot, Richard Whiting, who was then eighty-four years of age, was at Sharphorn, another residence of the community. He was brought back and questioned. At night when he was in bed, they searched his study for letters and books, and they claimed to have found a manuscript of Whiting's arguments against the divorce of the king and Queen Catharine; it had never been published; they did not know whether the venerable abbot had such intent or not. Stephen declares the spies themselves brought the book into the library. However, the abbot was chained to a cart and taken to London. The abbey had immense wealth; every Wednesday and Friday it fed and lodged three hundred boys; it was esteemed very highly in the neighborhood and received large donations from the knights in the vicinity. The abbot was accused of treason for concealing the sacred vessels; he was old, deaf, and sick, but was allowed no counsel. He asked permission to

take leave of his monks, and many little orphans; Russell and Layton only laughed. The people heard of his captivity and determined "to deliver or avenge" their favorite, but Russell hanged half a dozen of them and declared that "law, order and loyalty were vindicated." Whiting's body was quartered, and the pieces sent to Wells, Bath, Chester and Bridgewater, while his head, adorned with his gray hairs clotted by blood, was hung over the abbey gate.

The Report of the Commissioners

The original report of the commissioners does not exist. Burnet declares that he saw an extract from it, concerning one hundred and forty-four houses, which contained the most revolting revelations. Many of the commissioners' letters and various documents touching the suppression have been collected and published by the Camden Society. Waiving, for the present, the inquiry into the truth of the report, it was in substance as follows:

The commissioners reported about one-third of

the houses to be fairly well conducted, some of them models of excellent management and pure living; but the other two-thirds were charged with looseness beyond description. The number of inmates in some cloisters was kept below the required number, that there might be more money to divide among the monks. The number of servants sometimes exceeded that of the monks. Abbots bought and sold land in a fraudulent manner; gifts for hospitality were misapplied; licentiousness, gaming and drinking prevailed extensively. Crime and absolution for gold went hand in hand. One friar was said to have been the proud father of an illegitimate family of children, but he had in his possession a forged license from the pope, who permitted his wandering, "considering his frailty." Froude, in commenting upon the report, says: "If I were to tell the truth, I should have first to warn all modest eyes to close the book and read no farther."

All sorts of pious frauds were revealed. At Hales the monks claimed to have the blood of Christ brought from Jerusalem, and not visible to

anyone in mortal sin until he had performed good works, or, in other words, paid enough for his absolution. Two monks took the blood of a duck, which they renewed every week; this they put into a phial, one side of which consisted of a thin, transparent crystal; the other thick and opaque; the dark side was shown until the sinner's gold was exhausted, when, presto! change, the blood appeared by turning the other side of the phial. Innumerable toe-parings, bones, pieces of skin, three heads of St. Ursula, and other anatomical relics of departed saints, were said to cure every disease known to man. They had relics that could drive away plagues, give rain, hinder weeds, and in fact, render the natural world the plaything of decaying bones and shreds of dried skin. The monks of Reading had an angel with one wing, who had preserved the spear with which our Lord was pierced. Abbots were found to have concubines in or near the monasteries; midnight revels and drunken feasts were pleasant pastimes for monks weary with prayers and fasting. While it would be unjust to argue that the existence of "pious frauds" affords a justification for the suppression of the

monasteries, it must be remembered that they constituted one element in that condition of ecclesiastical life that was becoming repugnant to the English people. For several generations there had been a marked growth in the hostility toward various forms of superstition. True, neither Henry nor Cromwell can be accredited with the lofty intention of exterminating superstition, but the attitude of many people toward "pious frauds" helped to reconcile them to the destruction of the monasteries.

The Action of Parliament

The report of the commissioners was laid before Parliament in 1536. As it declared that the smaller monasteries were more corrupt than the larger ones, Parliament ordered the suppression of all those houses whose revenues were less than two hundred pounds per annum. By this act, three hundred and seventy-six houses were suppressed, whose aggregate revenue was thirty-two thousand pounds yearly. Movable property valued at about one hundred thousand pounds was also handed over to the "Court of Augmen-

tations of the King's Revenue," which was established to take care of the estates, revenues and other possessions of the monasteries. It is claimed that ten thousand monks and nuns were turned out into the world, to find bed and board as best they could. In 1538, two years later, the greater monasteries met a similar fate, which was no doubt hastened by the rebellions that followed the abolition of the smaller houses. Many of the abbots and monks were suspected of aiding in the rebellion against the king's authority by inciting the people to take up arms against him. Apprehending the coming doom, many abbots resigned; others were overcome by threats and yielded without a struggle. In many instances such monks received pensions varying from fifty-three shillings and four pence to four pounds a year. The investigations were constantly carried on, and all the foul stories that could be gathered were given to the people, to secure their approval of the king's action. With remorseless zeal the king and his commissioners, supported by various acts of parliament, persevered in their work of destruction, until even the

monastic hospitals, chantries, free chapels and collegiate churches, fell into the king's hands. By the year 1545, the ruin was complete. The monastic institution of England was no more. The total number of monasteries suppressed is variously estimated, but the following figures are approximately correct: monasteries, 616; colleges, 90; free chapels, 2,374; and hospitals, 110. The annual income was about one hundred and fifty thousand pounds, which was a smaller sum than was then believed to be in the control of the monks. Nearly fifty thousand persons were driven from the houses, to foment the discontent and to arouse the pity of the people. Such, in brief, was the extent of the suppression, but a little reflection will show that these statements of cold facts convey no conception of the confusion and sorrow that must have accompanied this terrific and wholesale assault upon an institution that had been accumulating its possessions for eight hundred years. At this distance from those tragic events, it is impossible to realize the dismay of those who stood aghast at this ruthless destruction of such venerable establishments.

The Effect of the Suppression Upon the People

For months the country had seen what was coming; letters from abbots and priors poured in upon the king and parliament, begging them to spare the ancient strongholds of religion. The churchmen argued: "If he plunders the monasteries, will not his next step be to plunder the churches?" They recalled what Sir Thomas More had said of their sovereign: "It is true, his majesty is very gracious with me, but if only my head would give him another castle in France, it would not be long before it disappeared." Sympathy for the monks, an inborn conservatism, a natural love for ancient institutions, a religious dread of trampling upon that which was held sacred by the church, a secret antipathy to reform, all these and other forces were against the suppression. But the report of the visitors was appalling, and the fear of the king's displeasure was widespread; so the bill was passed amid mingled feelings of joy, sympathy, hatred, fear, anxiety and uncertainty. The bishops were sullen;

Latimer was disappointed, for he wanted the church to have the proceeds.

Outside of Parliament there was much discontent among the nobles and gentry of Roman tendencies. Even the indifferent felt bitter against the king, because it seemed unjust that the monks, who had been sheltered, honored and enriched by the people, should be so rudely and so suddenly turned out of their possessions. A dangerously large portion of the people felt themselves insulted and outraged. At first, however, there were few who dared to voice their protests. "As the royal policy disclosed itself," says Green, "as the monarchy trampled under foot the tradition and reverence of ages gone by, as its figure rose, bare and terrible, out of the wreck of old institutions, England simply held her breath. It is only through the stray depositions of royal spies that we catch a glimpse of the wrath and hate which lay seething under the silence of the people." That silence was a silence of terror. To use the figure by which Erasmus describes the time, men felt "as if a scorpion lay sleeping under every stone." They stopped writing, gos-

siping, going to confession, and sending presents, for the most thoughtless word or deed might be tortured into treason against the king by the command of Cromwell.

The rebellion which followed the first attack upon the monasteries was not caused wholly by religious sentiments. The nobles regarded Cromwell as a base-born usurper and yearned for his fall, while the clergy felt outraged by his monstrous claims of authority in ecclesiastical affairs. In a sense the conflict that ensued was but a continuation of the long-standing struggle between the king, the barons, and the clergy for the supreme power. From the reign of Edward I., the people had commenced to assert their rights and the struggle had become a four-sided one.

These four factions were constantly shifting their allegiance, according to the varying conditions, and guided by their changing interests. At this time, the clergy, the nobles and the people in northern England, particularly, combined against the king, although the alliance was not formidable enough to overcome the forces supporting the king.

The secular clergy felt that they were disgraced

and coerced into submission. They felt their revenues, their honors, their powers, their glory, slipping away from them; they joined their mutterings and discontent with that of the monks, and then the fires of the rebellion blazed forth in the north, where the monasteries were more popular than in any other part of England.

The first outbreak occurred in Lincolnshire, in the autumn of 1536. It was easily and quickly suppressed. But another uprising in Yorkshire, in northern England, followed immediately, and for a time threatened serious consequences. Some of the best families in that part of the country joined the revolt, although it is noteworthy that these same families were afterwards Protestant and Puritan; the rebel army numbered about forty thousand men, well equipped for service. Many prominent abbots and sixteen hundred monks were in the ranks. The masses were bound by oath "to stand together for the love which they bore to Almighty God, His faith, the Holy Church, and the maintenance thereof; to the preservation of the king's person and his issue; to the purifying of the nobility, and to expel

all villein blood and evil counsellors from the king's presence; not from any private profit, nor to do his pleasure to any private person, nor to slay or murder through envy, but for the restitution of the Church, and the suppression of heretics and their opinions." It is clear, from the language of the oath, that the rebels aimed their blows at Cromwell. The secular clergy hated him because he had shorn them of their power; the monks hated him because he had turned them out of their cloisters, and clergy and people loathed him as a maintainer of heresy, a low-born foe of the Church. The insurgents carried banners on which was printed a crucifix, a chalice and host, and the five wounds, hence they called themselves "Pilgrims of Grace." The revolt was headed by Robert Aske, a barrister.

Cromwell acted most cautiously; he selected the strongest men to take the field. Richard Cromwell said of one of them, Sir John Russell, "for my lord admiral, he is so earnest in the matter that I dare say he could eat the Pilgrims without salt." The Duke of Norfolk was entrusted with the command of the king's forces.

Henry preferred negotiation to battle, in accept-

ing which the rebels were doomed. To wait was to fail. Their demands reduced to paper were: 1. The religious houses should be restored. 2. England should be reunited with Rome. 3. The first fruits and tenths should not be paid to the crown. 4. Heretics, meaning Cranmer, Latimer and others, should cease to be bishops. 5. Catharine's daughter Mary should be restored as heiress to the crown. These and other demands, the granting of which would have meant the death of the Reformation, were firmly refused by the king, who marveled that ignorant churls, "brutes and inexpert folk" should talk of theological and political subjects to him and to his council.

After several ineffectual attempts to meet the royal army in battle, partly due to storms and lack of subsistence, the rebels were induced to disperse and a general amnesty was declared. But new insurrections broke out in various quarters, and the enraged king determined to stamp out the smoldering fires of sedition. About seventy-five persons were hanged, and many prominent men were imprisoned and afterwards executed. This effectually suppressed the rebellion.

The revolt showed the strength of the opponents to the king's will, but it also proved conclusively that the monarchy was the strongest power in the realm; that the star of ecclesiastical domination had set forever in England; that henceforth English kings and not Italian popes were to govern the English people. True, the king was carrying things with a high hand, but one reform at a time; the yoke of papal power must first be lifted, even if at the same time the king becomes despotic in the exercise of his increased power. Once free from Rome, constitutional rights may be asserted and the power of an absolute monarchy judiciously restricted.

Following the Pilgrimage of Grace came the complete overthrow of the monastic system by the dissolution of the larger monasteries.

Henry's Disposal of Monastic Revenues

What use did Henry make of the revenues that fell into his hands? As soon as the vast estates of the monks were under the king's control, he was besieged by nobles, "praying for an estate." They

kneeled before him and specified what lands they wanted. They bribed Cromwell, who sold many of the estates at the rate of a twenty years' purchase, and in some instances presented valuable possessions to the king's followers. Many families, powerful in England at the present time, date the beginning of their wealth and position to the day when their ancestors received their share of the king's plunder.

The following interesting passage from Sir Edward Coke's Institutes, shows that Henry sought to quiet the fears of the people by making the most captivating promises concerning the decrease of taxes, and other magnificent schemes for the general welfare: "On the king's behalf, the members of both houses were informed in Parliament that no king or kingdom was safe but where the king had three abilities: 1. To live of his own and able to defend his kingdom upon any sudden invasion or insurrection. 2. To aid his confederates, otherwise they would never assist him. 3. To reward his well-deserving servants. Now the project was, that if Parliament would give unto him all the abbeys, priories, friaries, nunneries, and other

monasteries, that forever in time then to come he would take order that the same should not be converted to private uses, but first, that his exchequer, for the purpose aforesaid, should be enriched; secondly, the kingdom should be strengthened by a continual maintenance of forty thousand well-trained soldiers; thirdly, for the benefit and ease of the subject, who never afterwards (as was projected), in any time to come, should be charged with subsidies, fifteenths, loans or other common aids; fourthly, lest the honor of the realm should receive any diminution of honor by the dissolution of the said monasteries, there being twenty-nine lords of Parliament of the abbots and priors, . . . that the king would create a number of nobles."

The king was granted the revenues of the monasteries. About half the money was expended in coast defences and a new navy; and much of it was lavished upon his courtiers. With the exception of small pensions to the monks and the establishment of a few benefices, very little of the splendid revenue was ever devoted to religious or educational purposes. Small sums were set apart for Cambridge, Oxford and new grammar schools. Not-

withstanding the pensions, there was much suffering; it is said many of the outcast monks and nuns starved and froze to death by the roadside. Latimer and others wanted the king to employ the revenues for religious purposes, but Henry evidently thought the church had enough and refused. He did, however, intend to allot eighteen thousand pounds a year for eighteen new bishoprics, but once the gold was in his possession, his pious intentions suffered a decline, and he established only six, with inferior endowments, five of which exist to-day.

Was the Suppression Justifiable?

It is quite common to restrict this inquiry to a consideration of the report made by the commissioners against the monks, and to the methods employed by them in their investigations. The implication is that if the accusations against the monasteries can be discredited, or if it can be shown that the motives of the destroyers were selfish and their methods cruel, then it follows that the overthrow of the monasteries was a most iniquitous and unwarrantable proceeding. Reflection will show

that the question cannot be so restricted. It may be found that the monastic institution should have been destroyed, even though the charges against the monks were grossly exaggerated, the motives of the king unworthy, and the means he employed despicable.

At the outset a few facts deserve mention. It is usual for Protestants to recall with pride the glorious heroism of Protestant martyrs, but it should be remembered that Roman Catholicism also has had its martyrs. Protestant powers have not been free from tyranny and bloodshed. That noble spirit of self-sacrifice which has glorified many a character in history is not to be despised in one who dies for what we may pronounce to be false.

It must also be granted that the action of the king was not dictated by a pure passion for religious reform. Indeed it is a fair question whether Henry may be claimed by the Protestants at all. Aside from his rejection of the pope's authority, he was thoroughly Catholic in conviction and in practice. His impatience with the pope's position respecting his divorce, his need of money, his love of power, and many other personal considerations determined his attitude toward the papacy.

It should also be freely conceded that the royal commissioners were far from exemplary characters, and that they were often insolent and cruel in the prosecution of their work.

"Our posterity," says John Bale, "may well curse this wicked fact of our age; this unreasonable spoil of England's most noble antiquities." "On the whole," says Blunt, "it may be said that we must ever look back on that destruction as a series of transactions in which the sorrow, the waste, the impiety that were wrought, were enough to make the angels weep. It may be true that the monastic system had worn itself out for practical good; or at least, that it was unfitted for those coming ages which were to be so different from the ages that were past. But slaughter, desecration and wanton destruction, were no remedies for its sins, or its failings; nor was covetous rapacity the spirit of reformation."

Hume observes that "during times of faction, especially of a religious kind, no equity is to be expected from adversaries; and as it was known that the king's intention in this visitation was to find a pretext for abolishing the monasteries, we

may naturally conclude that the reports of the commissioners are very little to be relied upon." Hallam declares that "it is impossible to feel too much indignation at the spirit in which the proceedings were conducted."

But these and other just and honorable concessions in the interests of truth, which are to be found on the pages of eminent Protestant historians, are made to prove too much. It must be said that writers favorable to monasticism take an unfair advantage of these admissions, which simply testify to a spirit of candor and a love of truth, but do not contain the final conclusions of these historians. Employing these witnesses to confirm their opinions, the defenders of monasticism proceed with fervid, glowing rhetoric, breathing devotion and love on every page, to paint the sorrows and ruin of the Carthusian Fathers, and the abbots of Glastonbury and Reading. They ask, "Is this your boasted freedom, to slay these men in cold blood, not for immorality, but because they honestly did not acknowledge what no Protestant of to-day admits, viz.: that King Henry was the Supreme Head of the Church?" Having pointed out the exag-

gerations in the charges against the monks and having made us weep for the aged fathers of the Charterhouse, they skillfully lead the unwary to the conclusion that the suppression should never have taken place. This conclusion is illogical. The case is still open.

Furthermore, if one cared to indulge in historical reminiscences, he might justly express astonishment that Rome should object to an investigation conducted by men whose minds were already made up, or that she should complain because force was employed to carry out a needed reform. Did the commissioners take a few altar-cloths and decorate their horses? Did Rome never adorn men in garments of shame and parade them through streets to be mocked by the populace, and finally burned at the stake? Were the altar-cloths dear to Catholic hearts? Were not the Bibles burned in France, in Germany, in Spain, in Holland, in England, dear to the hearts of the reformers? But however justifiable such a line of argument may be, there is little to be gained by charging the sins of the past against the men of to-day. Nevertheless, if these facts and many like them were remembered, less would

be said about the cruelties that accompanied the suppression of the monasteries.

Were the charges against the monks true? It seems impossible to doubt that in the main they were, although it should be admitted that many monasteries were beyond reproach. Eliminating gross exaggerations, lies and calumnies, there still remains a body of evidence that compels the verdict of guilt. The legislation of the church councils, the decrees of popes, the records of the courts, the reports of investigating committees appointed by various popes, the testimony of the orders against each other, the chronicles, letters and other extant literature, abound in such detailed, specific charges of monastic corruption that it is simply preposterous to reject the testimony. All the efforts at reformation, and they were many, had failed. Many bishops confessed their inability to cope with the growing disorders. It is beyond question that lay robbers were encouraged to perpetrate acts of sacrilege because the monks were frequently guilty of forgery and violence. Commenting upon the impression which monkish lawlessness must have made upon the minds of such men as Wyclif, Pike says: "They

saw with their own eyes those wild and lawless scenes, the faint reflection of which in contemporaneous documents may excite the wonder of modern lawyers and modern moralists." The legislation of church and state for a century before Henry VIII. shows that the monks were guilty of brawling, frequenting taverns, indulging in licentious pleasures and upholding unlawful games.

Bonaventura, the General of the Franciscan Order in its earliest days, and its palmiest, for the first years of a monastic order were always its best years—this mendicant, their pride and their glory, tells us that within fifty years of the death of its founder there were many mendicants roaming around in disorderly fashion, brazen and shameless beggars of scandalous fame. This unenviable record was kept up down to the days of Wyclif, who charged the begging friars with representing themselves as holy and needy, while they were robust of body, rich in possessions, and dwelt in splendid houses, where they gave sumptuous banquets. What shall one say of the hysterical ravings against Henry of the "Holy Maid of Kent," whose fits and predictions were palmed off by five

ecclesiastics, high in authority, as supernatural manifestations? What must have been the state of monasteries in which such meretricious schemes were hatched, to deceive silly people, thwart the king and stop the movements for reform?

Moreover, the various attempts to reform or to suppress the monasteries prior to Henry's time show he was simply carrying out what, in a small way, had been attempted before. King John, Edward I. and Edward III., had confiscated "alien priories." Richard II. and Henry IV. had made similar raids. In 1410, the House of Commons proposed the confiscation of all the temporalities held by bishops, abbots and priors, that the money might be used for a standing army, and to increase the income of the nobles and secular clergy. It was not done, but the attempt shows the trend of public opinion on the question of abolishing the monasteries. In 1416, Parliament dissolved the alien priories and vested their estates in the crown. There is extant a letter of Cardinal Morton, Legate of the Apostolic See, and Archbishop of Canterbury, to the abbot of St. Albans, one of the mightiest abbeys in all England. It was written as the result

of an investigation started by Innocent VIII., in 1489. In this communication the abbot and his monks were charged with the grossest licentiousness, waste and thieving. Lina Eckenstein, in her interesting work on "Woman Under Monasticism," says: "It were idle to deny that the state of discipline in many houses was bad, but the circumstances under which Morton's letter was penned argue that the charges made in it should be accepted with some reservation. In 1523, Cardinal Wolsey obtained bulls from the pope authorizing the suppression of forty small monasteries, and the application of their revenues to educational institutions, on the ground that the houses were homes neither of religion nor of learning.

What Henry did, every country in Europe has felt called upon to do in one way or another. Germany, Italy, Spain, France have all suppressed monasteries, and despite the suffering which attended the dissolution in England, the step was taken with less loss of life and less injury to the industrial welfare of the people than anywhere else in Europe.*

Hooper, who was made a bishop in the reign of

*Appendix, Note J.

Edward VI., expressed the Protestant view of Henry's reforms in a letter written about the year 1546. "Our king," he says, "has destroyed the pope, but not popery. . . . The impious mass, the most shameful celibacy of the clergy, the invocation of saints, auricular confession, superstitious abstinence from meats, and purgatory, were never before held by the people in greater esteem than at the present moment." In other words, the independence of the Church of England was secured by those who, if they were not Roman Catholics, were certainly closer in faith to Rome than they were to Protestantism. The Protestant doctrines did not become the doctrines of the Church of England until the reign of Edward VI., and it was many years after that before the separation from Rome was complete in doctrine as well as respects the authority of the pope.

These facts indicate that there must have been other causes for the success of the English Reformation than the greed or ambition of the monarch. Those causes are easily discovered. One of them was the hostility of the people to the alien priories. The origin of the alien priories dates back to the

Norman conquest. The Normans shared the spoils of their victory with their continental friends. English monasteries and churches were given to foreigners, who collected the rents and other kinds of income. These foreign prelates had no other interest in England than to derive all the profit they could from their possessions. They appointed whom they pleased to live in their houses, and the monks, being far away from their superiors, became a source of constant annoyance to the English people. The struggle against these alien priories had been carried on for many years, and so many of them had been abolished that the people became accustomed to the seizure of monasteries.

Large sums of money were annually paid to the pope, and the English people were loudly complaining of the constant drain on their resources. It was a common saying in the reign of Henry III., that "England is the pope's farm." The "Good Parliament," in 1376, affirmed "that the taxes paid to the church of Rome amounted to five times as much as those levied for the king; . . . that the brokers of the sinful city of Rome promoted for money unlearned and unworthy caitiffs to bene-

fices of the value of a thousand marks, while the poor and learned hardly obtain one of twenty." Various laws, heartily supported by the clergy as well as by the civil authorities, were enacted from time to time, aimed at the abuses of papal power. So steadfast and strong was the opposition to the interference of foreigners in English affairs, it would be possible to show that there was an evolution in the struggle against Rome that was certain to culminate in the separation, whether Henry had accomplished it or not. What might have occurred if the monks had reformed and the pope withdrawn his claims it is impossible to know. The fact is that the monks grew worse instead of better, and the arrogance of foreigners became more unendurable. "The corruption of the church establishment, in fact," says Lea, "had reached a point which the dawning enlightenment of the age could not much longer endure. . . . Intoxicated with centuries of domination, the muttered thunders of growing popular discontent were unheeded, and its claims to spiritual and temporal authority were asserted with increasing vehemence, while its corruptions were daily displayed before the people with more careless

cynicism." In view of this condition of affairs, the existence of which even the adherents of modern Rome must acknowledge, one cannot but wonder that the ruin of the monasteries should be attributed to Henry's desire "to overthrow the rights of women, to degrade matrimony and to practice concubinage." Such an explanation is too superficial; it ignores a multitude of historical facts.

The monasteries had to fall if England was to be saved from the horrors of civil war, if the hand of the pope was to remain uplifted from her, if the insecure gains of the Reformation were to become established and glorious achievements; if, in fact, all those benefits accompanying human progress were to become the heritage of succeeding ages.

Whatever benefits the monks had conferred upon mankind, and these were neither few nor slight, they had become fetters on the advancement of freedom, education and true religion. They were the standing army of the pope, occupying the last and strongest citadel. They were the unyielding advocates of an ideal that was passing away. It was sad to see the Carthusian house fall, but in spite of the high character of its inmates, it was a part of

an institution that stood for the right of foreigners to rule England. It was unfortunate they had thrown themselves down before the car of progress, but there they were; they would not get up; the car must roll on, for so God himself had decreed, and hence they were crushed in its advance. Their martyrdom was truly a poor return for their virtues, but there never has been a moral or political revolution that has furthered the general well-being of humanity, in which just and good men have not suffered. It would be delightful if freedom and progress could be secured, and effete institutions destroyed or reformed, without the accompaniment of disaster and death, but it is not so.

The monks stood for opposition to reform, and therefore came into direct conflict with the king, who was blindly groping his way toward the future, and who was, in fact, the unconscious agent of many reform forces that concentrated in him. He did not comprehend the significance of his proceedings. He did not take up the cause of the English people with the pure and intelligent motive of encouraging free thought and free religion. He did not realize that he was leading the mighty army of Prot-

estant reformers. He little dreamed that the people whose cause he championed would in turn assert their rights and make it impossible for an English sovereign to enjoy the absolute authority which he wielded. Truly "there is a power, not ourselves," making for freedom, progress and truth.

Thus a number of causes brought on the ruin of the monasteries. Henry's need of money; the refusal of the monks to sign the acts of supremacy and succession; the general drift of reform, and the iniquity of the monks. They fell from natural causes and through the operation of laws which God alone controls. As Hill neatly puts it, "Monasticism was healthy, active and vigorous; it became idle, listless and extravagant; it engendered its own corruption, and out of that corruption came death."

Richard Bagot, a Catholic, in a recent article on the question, "Will England become Catholic?" which was published in the "Nuova Antologia," says: "Though it is impossible not to blame the so-called Reformers for the acts of sacrilege and barbarism through which they obtained the religious and political liberty so necessary to the intellectual and social progress of the race, it cannot be denied

that no sooner had the power of the papacy come to an end in England than the English nation entered upon that free development which has at last brought it to its present position among the other nations of the world." Mr. Bagot also admits that "the political intrigues and insatiable ambition of the papacy during the succeeding centuries constituted a perpetual menace to England."

The true view, therefore, is that two types of religious and political life, two epochs of human history, met in Henry's reign. The king and the pope were the exponents of conflicting ideals. The fall of the monasteries was an incident in the struggle. "The Catholics," says Froude, "had chosen the alternative, either to crush the free thought which was bursting from the soil, or to be crushed by it; and the future of the world could not be sacrificed to preserve the exotic graces of medieval saints."

The problem is reduced to this, Was the Reformation desirable? Is Protestantism a curse or a blessing? Would England and the world be better off under the sway of medieval religion than under the influence of modern Protestantism? If

monasticism were a fetter on human liberty and industry, if the monasteries were "so many seminaries of superstition and of folly," there was but one thing to do—to break the fetters and to destroy the monasteries. To have succeeded in so radical a reform as that begun by King Henry, with forty thousand monks preaching treason, would have been an impossibility. Henry cannot be blamed because the monks chose to entangle themselves with politics and to side with Rome as against the English nation.

Results of the Dissolution

Many important results followed the fall of the monasteries. The majority of the House of Lords was now transferred from the abbots to the lay peers. The secular clergy, who had been fighting the monks for centuries, were at last accorded their proper standing in the church. Numerous unjust ecclesiastical privileges were swept aside, and in many respects the whole church was strengthened and purified. Credulity and superstition began to decline. Ecclesiastical criminals were no longer able

to escape the just penalty for their crimes. Naturally all these beneficent ends were not attained immediately. For a while there was great disorder and distress. Society was disturbed not only by the stoppage of monastic alms-giving, but the wandering monks, unaccustomed to toil and without a trade, increased the confusion.

In this connection it is well to point out that some writers make very much of the poverty relieved by the monks, and claim that the nobles, into whose hands the monastic lands fell, did almost nothing to mitigate the distresses of the unfortunate. But they ignore the fact that a blind and undiscriminating charity was the cause, and not the cure, of much of the miserable wretchedness of the poor. Modern society has learned that the monastic method is wholly wrong; that fraud and laziness are fostered by a wholesale distribution of doles. The true way to help the poor is to enable the poor to assist themselves; to teach them trades and give them work. The sociological methods of to-day are thoroughly anti-monastic.

On the other hand, the infidel Zosimus, quoted by Gibbon, was not far wrong when he said "the

monks robbed an empire to help a few beggars." The fact that the religious houses did distribute alms and entertain strangers is not disputed; indeed it is pleasant to reflect upon this noble charity of the monks; it is a bright spot in their history. But it is in no sense true that they deserve all the credit for relieving distress. They received the money for alms in the shape of rents, gifts and other kinds of income. Hallam says, "There can be no doubt that many of the impotent poor derived support from their charity. But the blind eleemosynary spirit inculcated by the Romish church is notoriously the cause, not the cure, of beggary and wickedness. The monastic foundations, scattered in different countries, could never answer the ends of local and limited succor. Their gates might, indeed, be open to those who knocked at them for alms. . . . Nothing could have a stronger tendency to promote that vagabond mendicity which severe statutes were enacted to repress."

It seems almost ungracious to quote such an observation, because it may be distorted into a criticism of charity itself, or made to serve the purposes of certain anti-Romanists who cannot even spare

those noble women who minister to the sick in the home or hospital from their bigoted criticisms. Small indeed must be the soul of that man who permits his religious opinions to blind his eyes to the inestimable services of those heroic and self-sacrificing women. But even Roman Catholic students of social problems must recognize the folly of indiscriminate alms-giving. "In proportion as justice between man and man has declined, that form of charity which consists in giving money has been more quickened." The promotion of industry, the repression of injustice, the encouragement of self-reliance and thrift, are needed far more than the temporary relief of those who suffer from oppression or from their own wrong-doing.

Some of those who deplore the fall of the monasteries make much of the fact that the modern world is menaced by materialism. "With very rare exceptions," cries Maitre, a French Catholic, "the most undisguised materialism has everywhere replaced the lessons and recollections of the spiritual life. The shrill voice of machinery, the grinding of the saw or the monotonous clank of the piston, is heard now, where once were heard chants and

prayers and confessions. Once the monk freely undid the door to let the stranger in, and now we see a sign, 'no admittance,' lest a greedy rival purloin the tricks of trade." Montalembert, referring to the ruin of the cloisters in France, grieves thus: "Sometimes the spinning-wheel is installed under the ancient sanctuary. Instead of echoing night and day the praises of God, these dishonored arches too often repeat only the blasphemies of obscene cries." The element of truth in these laments gives them their sting, but one should beware of the fervid rhetoric of the worshipers of medievalism. This century is nobler, purer, truer, manlier, and more humane than any of the centuries that saw the greatest triumphs of the monks. They, too, had their blasphemies, often under the cloak of piety; they, too, had their obscene cries. Their superstitions and frauds concealed beneath those "dishonored arches" were infinitely worse than the noise of machinery weaving garments for the poor, or producing household comforts to increase the happiness of the humblest man.

There is much that is out of joint, much to justify doleful prophecies, in the social and religious

conditions of the present age, but the signs of the times are not all ominous. At all events, nothing would be gained by a return to the monkish ideals of the past. The hope of the world lies in the further development and completer realization of those great principles of human freedom that distinguish this century from the past. The history of monasticism clearly shows that the monasteries could not minister to that development of liberty, truth and justice, which constitute the indispensable condition of human happiness and human progress. Unable to adjust themselves to the new age, unwilling to welcome the new light, rejecting the doctrine of individual freedom, the monks were forced to retire from the field.

So fell in England that institution which, for twelve centuries, had exercised marvelous dominion over the spiritual and temporal interests of the continent, and for eight hundred years had suffered or thrived on English soil. "The day came, and that a drear winter day, when its last mass was sung, its last censer waved, its last congregation bent in rapt and lovely adoration before the altar." Its

majestic and solemn ruins proclaim its departed grandeur. Its deeds of mercy, its conflicts with kings and bishops, its prayers and chants and penances, its virtues and its vices, its trials and its victories, its wealth and its poverty, all are gone. Silence and death keep united watch over cloister and tomb. We should be ungrateful if we forgot its blessings; we should be untrue if, ignoring its evils, we sought to bring back to life that which God has laid in the sepulcher of the dead.

"Where pleasant was the spot for men to dwell,
Amid its fair broad lands the abbey lay,
Sheltering dark orgies that were shame to tell,
And cowled and barefoot beggars swarmed the way,
All in their convent weeds of black, and white, and gray.

From many a proud monastic pile, o'erthrown,
Fear-struck, the brooded inmates rushed and fled;
The web, that for a thousand years had grown
O'er prostrate Europe, in that day of dread
Crumbled and fell, as fire dissolves the flaxen thread."

—*Bryant.*

VIII

CAUSES AND IDEALS OF MONASTICISM

ALL FORMS of religious character and conduct are grounded in certain cravings of the soul, which, in seeking satisfaction, are influenced by theoretical opinions. The longings of the human heart constitute the impulse, or the energy, of religion. The intellectual convictions act as guiding forces. As a religious type, therefore, the monk was produced by the action of certain desires, influenced by specific opinions respecting God, the soul, the body, the world and their relations.

The existence of monasticism in non-Christian religions implies that whatever impetus the ascetic impulses in human nature received from Christian teaching, there is some broader basis for monastic life than the tenets of any creed. Biblical history and Christian theology furnish some explana-

tion of the rise of Christian monasticism, but they do not account for the monks of ancient India. The teachings of Jesus exerted a profound influence upon the Christian monks, but they cannot explain the Oriental asceticism that flourished before the Christ of the New Testament was born. There must have been some motive, or motives, operating on human nature as such, a knowledge of which will help to account for the monks of Indian antiquity as well as the begging friars of modern times. It will therefore be in order to begin the present inquiry by seeking those causes which gave rise to monasticism in general.

Causative Motives of Monasticism

Whatever the origin of religion itself, it is certain that it is man's inalienable concern. He is, as Sabatier says, "incurably religious." Of all the motives ministering to this ruling passion, the longing for righteousness and for the favor of God is supreme. The savage only partially grasps the significance of his spiritual aspirations, and dimly understands the nature of the God he adores or fears. His worship

may be confined to frantic efforts to ward off the vengeful assaults of an angry deity, but however gross his religious conceptions, there is at the heart of his religion a desire to live in peaceful relations with the Supreme Being.

As religion advances, the ethical character of God and the nature of true righteousness are more clearly apprehended. But the idea that moral purity and fellowship with God are in some way associated with self-denial has always been held by the religious world. But what does such a conception involve? What must one do to deny self? The answer to that question will vastly influence the form of religious conduct. Thus while all religious men may unite in a craving for holiness by a participation in the Divine nature, they will differ widely in their opinions as to the nature of this desirable righteousness and as to the means by which it may be attained. Roman Catholicism, by the voice of the monk, whom it regards as the highest type of Christian living, gives one answer to these questions; Protestantism, protesting against asceticism, gives a different reply.

The desire for salvation was, therefore, the pri-

mary cause of all monasticism. Many quotations might be given from the sacred writings of India, establishing beyond dispute, that underlying the confusing variety of philosophical ideas and ascetic practices of the non-Christian monks, was a consuming desire for the redemption of the soul from sin. Buddha said on seeing a mendicant, "The life of a devotee has always been praised by the wise. It will be my refuge and the refuge of other creatures, it will lead us to a real life, to happiness and immortality."

Dharmapala, in expounding the teachings of the Buddha, at the World's Parliament of Religions, in Chicago, clearly showed that the aim of the Buddhist is "the entire obliteration of all that is evil," and "the complete purification of the mind." That this is the purpose of the asceticism of India is seen by the following quotation from Dharmapala's address: "The advanced student of the religion of Buddha when he has faith in him thinks: 'Full of hindrances is household life, a path defiled by passions; free as the air is the life of him who has renounced all worldly things. How difficult is it for the man who dwells at home to live the

higher life in all its fullness, in all its purity, in all its perfection! Let me then cut off my hair and beard, let me clothe myself in orange-colored robes, and let me go forth from a household life into the homeless state!'"

In the same parliament, Mozoomdar, the brilliant and attractive representative of the Brahmo Somaj, in describing "Asia's Service to Religion," thus stated the motives and spirit of Oriental asceticism: "What lesson do the hermitages, the monasteries, the cave temples, the discipline and austerities of the religious East teach the world? Renunciation. The Asiatic apostle will ever remain an ascetic, a celibate, a homeless Akinchana, a Fakeer. We Orientals are all the descendants of John the Baptist. Any one who has taken pains at spiritual culture must admit that the great enemy to a devout concentration of mind is the force of bodily and worldly desire. Communion with God is impossible, so long as the flesh and its lusts are not subdued. . . . It is not mere temperance, but positive asceticism; not mere self-restraint, but self-mortification; not mere self-sacrifice, but self-extinction; not mere morality, but absolute holiness." And

further on in his address, Mozoomdar claimed that this asceticism is practically the essential principle in Christianity and the meaning of the cross of Christ: "This great law of self-effacement, poverty, suffering, death, is symbolized in the mystic cross so dear to you and dear to me. Christians, will you ever repudiate Calvary? Oneness of will and character is the sublimest and most difficult unity with God."

The chief value of these quotations from Mozoomdar lies in the fact that they show forth the underlying motive of all asceticism. It would be unjust to the distinguished scholar to imply that he defends those extreme forms of monasticism which have appeared in India or in Christian countries. On the contrary, while he maintains, in his charming work, "The Oriental Christ," that "the height of self-denial may fitly be called asceticism," he is at the same time fully alive to its dangerous exaggerations. "Pride," he says, "creeps into the holiest and humblest exercises of self-discipline. It is the supremest natures only that escape. The practice of asceticism therefore is always attended with great danger." The language of Mozoomdar, however, like that of many Christian monastic writers,

opens the door to many grave excesses. It is another evidence of the necessity for defining what one means by "self-mortification" and "self-extinction."

Turning now to Christian monasticism, it will be found that, as in the case of Oriental monasticism, the yearning for victory over self was uppermost in the minds of the best Christian monks. A few words from a letter written by Jerome to Rusticus, a young monk, illustrates the truth of this observation: "Let your garments be squalid," he says, "to show that your mind is white, and your tunic coarse, to show that you despise the world. But give not way to pride, lest your dress and your language be found at variance. Baths stimulate the senses, and are therefore to be avoided."

To keep the mind white, to despise the world, to overcome pride, to stop the craving of the senses for gratification,—these were the objects of the monks, in order to accomplish which they macerated and starved their bodies, avoided baths, wore rags, affected humble language and fled from the scenes of pleasure. The goal was highly commendable, even if the means employed were inadequate to produce the desired results.

All down through the Middle Ages, the idea continued to prevail that the monastic life was the highest and purest expression of the Christian religion, and that the monks' chances of heaven were much better than those of any other class of men. The laity believed them to be a little nearer God than even the clergy, and so they paid them gold for their prayers. It will readily be understood that in degenerate times, so profitable a doctrine would be earnestly encouraged by the monks. The knight, whose conscience revolted against his conduct but who could not bring himself to a complete renunciation of the world, believed that heaven would condone his faults or crimes if in some way he could make friends with the dwellers in the cloister. To this end, he founded abbeys and sustained monasteries by liberal gifts of gold and land. Such a donation was made in the following language: "I, Gervais, who belong to the chivalry of the age, caring for the salvation of my soul, and considering that I shall never reach God by my own prayers and fastings, have resolved to recommend myself in some other way to those who, night and day, serve God by these practices, so that, thanks

to their intercession, I may be able to obtain that salvation which I of myself am unable to merit." Another endowment was made by Peter, Knight of Maull, in these quaint terms: "I, Peter, profiting by this lesson, and desirous, though a sinner and unworthy, to provide for my future destiny, I have desired that the bees of God may come to gather their honey in my orchards, so that when their fair hives shall be full of rich combs, they may be able to remember him by whom the hive was given."

The people believed that the prayers of the monks lifted their souls into heaven; that their curses doomed them to the bottomless pit. A monastery was the safe and sure road to heaven. The observation of Gibbon respecting the early monks is applicable to all of them: "Each proselyte who entered the gates of a monastery was persuaded that he trod the steep and thorny path of eternal happiness."

The second cause for monasticism in general was a natural love of solitude, which became almost irresistible when reinforced by a despair of the world's redemption. The poet voiced the feelings of almost every soul, at some period in life, when he wrote:

"O for a lodge in some vast wilderness,
Some boundless contiguity of shade,
Where rumor of oppression or deceit,
Of unsuccessful or successful war,
Might never reach me more."

The longing for solitude accompanied the desire for salvation. An unconquerable weariness of the world, with its strife and passion, overcame the seeker after God. A yearning to escape the duties of social life, which were believed to interfere with one's duty to God, possessed his soul. The flight from the world was merely the method adopted to satisfy his soul-longings. If such times of degeneracy and rampant iniquity ever return, if humanity is again compelled to stagger under the moral burdens that crushed the Roman Empire, without doubt the love of solitude, which is now held in check by the satisfactions of a comparatively pure and peaceful social life, will again arise in its old-time strength and impel men to seek in waste and lonely places the virtues they cannot acquire in a decaying civilization.

Even amid the delights of human fellowship, and surrounded by so much that ministers to restfulness of soul, it is often hard to repress a longing to

shatter the fetters of custom, to flee from the noise and confusion of this hurrying, fretful world, and to pass one's days in a coveted retirement, far from the maddening strife and tumult. Montalembert's profound appreciation of monastic life was never more aptly illustrated than in the following declaration: "In the depths of human nature there exists without doubt, a tendency instinctive, though confused and evanescent, toward retirement and solitude. What man, unless completely depraved by vice or weighed down by care and cupidity, has not experienced once, at least, before his death, the attraction of solitude?"

While the motives just described were unquestionably preëminent among the causative factors in monasticism, it should not be taken for granted that there were no others, or that either or both of these motives controlled every monk. The personal considerations tending to keep up the flight from the world were numerous and active. It would be a mistake to credit all the monks, and at some periods even a majority of them, with pure and lofty purposes. Oftentimes criminals were par-

doned through the intercession of abbots on condition that they would retire to a monastery. The jilted lover and the commercial bankrupt, the deserted or bereaved wife, the pauper and the invalid, the social outcast and the shirker of civic duties, the lazy and the fickle were all to be found in the ranks of the monastic orders. Ceasing to feel any interest in the joys of society, they had turned to the cloister as a welcome asylum in the hour of their sorrow or disappointment. To some it was an easy way out of the struggle for existence, to others it meant an end to taxes and to military service, to still others it was a haven of rest for a weary body or a disappointed spirit. Thus many specific, individual considerations acted with the general desires for salvation and solitude to strengthen and to perpetuate the institution.

Beliefs Affecting the Causative Motives

In the first chapter it was shown that a variety of views respecting the relation of the body and the soul influenced the origin and development of Christian monasticism. It will not now be neces-

sary to repeat what was there said. The essential teaching of all these false opinions was that the body was in itself evil, that the gratification of natural appetites was inherently wrong, and that true holiness consisted in the complete subjection of the body by self-denial and torture. Jerome distinctly taught that what was natural was opposed to God. The Gnostics and many of the early Christians believed that this world was ruled by the devil. The Gnostics held that this opposition of the kingdom of matter to God was fundamental and eternal. The Christians, however, maintained that the antagonism was temporary, the Lord having given the world over to evil spirits for a time. The prevailing opinion among almost all schools was that a union with God was only possible to those who had extinguished bodily desires.

The ascetic theory undoubtedly derived much support from the views held concerning the teachings of the Bible. The Oriental monks frequently quoted from their sacred books to justify their habits and ideals. In like manner, the Christian monks believed that they, and they alone, were literally obeying the commands of Christ and his

apostles. This phase of the subject will receive attention when the three vows of monasticism are considered.

In the West, two conditions, one political and social, the other religious, set in motion all these spiritual desires and ascetic beliefs tending toward monasticism. One was the corrupted state of Roman society and the approaching overthrow of the Roman Empire. The other was the secularization of the church.

Men naturally cling to society as long as there exists any well-founded hope for its regeneration, but when every expectation for the survival of righteousness yields to a conviction that doom is inevitable, then the flight from the world begins. This was precisely the situation in the declining days of Rome and Alexandria, when Christian monasticism came into being. The monks believed that the end of the world was nigh, that all things temporal and earthly were doomed, and that God's hand was against the empire. "That they were correct in their judgment of the world about them," says Kingsley, "contemporary history proves abundantly. That they were correct, likewise, in believing that

some fearful judgment was about to fall on man, is proved by the fact that it did fall."

So they fled to escape being caught in the ruins of society's tottering structure,—fled to make friends with the angels and with God. If one cannot live purely in the midst of corruption, by all means let him live purely away from corruption, but let him never forget that his piety is of a lower order than that which abides uncorrupted in the midst of degenerate society. There is much truth in the observation of Charles Reade in "The Cloister and the Hearth": "So long as Satan walks the whole earth, tempting men, and so long as the sons of Belial do never lock themselves in caves but run like ants, to and fro corrupting others, the good man that sulks apart, plays the Devil's game, or at least gives him the odds."

But the early Christian monks believed that their safety was only in flight. It was not altogether an unworthy motive; at least it is easy to sympathize with these men struggling against odds, of the magnitude of which the modern Christian has only the faintest conception.

The conviction that the only true and certain

way to secure salvation is by flight from the world, continued to prevail during the succeeding centuries of monastic history, and it can hardly be said to have entirely disappeared even at the present time. Anselm of Canterbury, in the twelfth century, wrote to a young friend reminding him that the glory of this world was perishing. True, not monks only are saved, "but," says he, "who attains to salvation in the most certain, who in the most noble way, the man who seeks to love God alone, or he who seeks to unite the love of God with the love of the world? . . . Is it rational when danger is on every side, to remain where it is the greatest?"

The Christian church set up an ideal of life which it was impossible to realize within her borders, and one which differed in many respects from the teachings of Jesus. Her demands involved a renunciation of the world, a superiority to all the enticements of bodily appetites, a lofty scorn of secular bonds and social concerns. A vigorous religious faith had conquered a mighty empire, but corruption attended its victory. The standard of Christian morals was lowered, or had at least degen-

erated into a cold, formal ideal that no one was expected to realize; hence none strove to attain it but the monks. When Roman society with its selfishness, lust and worldliness, swept in through the open doors of the church and took possession of the sanctuary, those who had cherished the ascetic ideal gave up the fight against the world, and the flight from the world-church began. They could not tolerate this union of the church with a pagan state and an effete civilization. In some respects, as a few writers maintain, many of these hermits were like the old Jewish prophets, fighting single-handed against corruption in church and state, refusing to yield themselves as slaves to the authority of institutions that had forsaken the ideals of the past.

Thus the conviction that the end of human society was nigh, and that the church could no longer serve as an asylum for the lovers of righteousness, with certain philosophical ideas respecting the body, the world and God, united to produce the assumption that salvation was more readily attainable in the deserts; and Christian monasticism, in its hermit form, began its long and eventful history.

Causes of Variations in Monasticism

Prominent among the causes producing variations in the monastic type was the influence of climatic conditions and race characteristics.

The monasticism as well as the religion of the East has always differed from the monasticism and the religion of the West. The Eastern mind is mystical, dreamy, contemplative; the Western mind loves activity, is intensely practical. Representatives of the Eastern faiths in the recent Parliament of Religions accused the West of materialism, of loving the body more than the soul. They affected to despise all material prosperity, and gloried in their assumed superiority, on account of their love for religious contemplation. This radical difference between the races of the East and West is clearly seen in the monastic institution. Benedict embodied in his rules the spirit and active life of the West, and hence, the monastic system, then in danger of dying, or stagnating, revived and spread all over Europe. Again, the hermit life was ill-adapted to the West. Men could not live out of doors in

Europe and subsist on small quantities of food as in Egypt. The rigors of the climate in Europe demanded an adaptation to new conditions.

But aside from the differences between Eastern and Western monasticism, the Christian institution passed through a variety of changes. The growth of monasticism from the hermit stage to the cloistral life has already been described. To what shall the development of the community system be attributed? No religious institution can remain stationary, unaffected by the changing conditions of the society in which it exists. The progress of the intellect, and the development of social, political and industrial conditions, effect great transformations in religious organizations.

The monastic institution grew up amid the radical changes of European society. In its early days it witnessed the invasion of the barbarians, which swept away old political divisions and destroyed many of the heritages of an ancient civilization. Then the process of reconstruction slowly began. New states were forming; nations were crystallizing. The barbarian was to lay the foundations of great cities and organize powerful

commonwealths out of wild but victorious tribes. The monk could not remain in hiding. He was brother to the roving warrior. The blood in his veins was too active to permit him to stand still amid the mighty whirl of events. Without entirely abandoning his cloistral life, he became a zealous missionary of the church among the barbarians, a patron of letters and of agriculture, in short a stirring participant in the work of civilization.

Next came the crusades. Jerusalem was to be captured for Christ and the church. The monk then appeared as a crusade-preacher, a warrior on the battle-field, or a nurse in the military hospital.

The rise of feudalism likewise wrought a change in the spirit and position of the monks. The feudal lord was master of his vassals. "The genius of feudalism," says Allen, "was a spirit of uncontrolled independence." So the abbot became a feudal lord with immense possessions and powers. He was no longer the obscure, spiritual father of a little family of monks, but a temporal lord also, an aristocrat, ruling wide territories, and dwelling in a monastery little different from the castle of the knight and often exceeding it in splendor. With

wealth came ease, and hard upon the heels of ease came laziness, arrogance, corruption.

Then followed the marvelous intellectual awakening, the moral revival, the discoveries and inventions of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The human mind at last had aroused itself from a long repose, or turned from a profitless activity into broad and fruitful fields. The corruption of the monasteries meant the laxity of vows, the cessation of ministration to the poor and the sick. Then arose the tender and loving Francis, with his call to poverty and to service. The independent exercise of the intellect gave birth to heresies, but the Dominicans appeared to preach them down.

The growth of the secular spirit and the progress of the new learning were too much for the old monasticism. The monk had to adapt himself to a new age, an age that is impatient of mere contemplation, that spurns the rags of the begging friar and rebels against the fierce intolerance of the Dominican preaching. So, lastly, came the suave, determined, practical, cultured Jesuit, ready to comply, at least outwardly, with all the requirements of modern times. Does the new age reject monastic

seclusion? Very well, the Jesuit throws off his monastic garb and forsakes his cloister, to take his place among men. Are the ignorance and the filth of the begging friars offensive? The Jesuit is cultured, affable and spotlessly clean. Does the new age demand liberty? "Liberty," cries the Jesuit, "is the divine prerogative, colossal in proportion, springing straight from the broad basin of the soul's essence!"

Such in its merest outlines is the story of the development of the monastic type and its causes.

The Fundamental Monastic Vows

The ultimate monastic ideal was the purification of the soul, but when translated into definite, concrete terms, the immediate aim of the monk was to live a life of poverty, celibacy and obedience. Riches, marriage and self-will were regarded as forms of sinful gratification, which every holy man should abandon. The true Christian, according to monasticism, is poor, celibate and obedient. The three fundamental monastic vows should therefore receive special consideration.

1. The Vow of Poverty. The monks of all countries held the possession of riches to be a barrier to high spiritual attainments. In view of the fact that an inordinate love of wealth has proved disastrous to many nations, and that it is extremely difficult for a rich man to escape the hardening, enervating and corrupting influences of affluence, the position of the monks on this question is easily understood. The Christian monks based their vow of poverty upon the Bible, and especially upon the teachings of Christ, who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor. He said to the rich young man, "Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor." In commissioning the disciples to preach the gospel He said: "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses; nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, nor shoes." In the discourse on counting the cost of discipleship, He said: "So therefore, whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." He promised rewards to "every one that left houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands for my name's sake." "It is easier," He once said, "for a

camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven." He portrayed the pauper Lazarus as participating in the joys of heaven, while the rich Dives endured the torments of the lost. As reported in Luke, He said, "Blessed are ye poor." He Himself was without a place to lay His head, a houseless wanderer upon the earth.

The apostle James cries to the men of wealth: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl, for your miseries that shall come upon you." John said: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

Whatever these passages, and many others of like import, may signify, it is not at all strange that Christians, living in times when wealth was abused, and when critical Biblical scholarship was unknown, should have understood Christ to command a life of poverty as an indispensable condition of true holiness.

There are three ways of interpreting Christ's doctrine of wealth. First, it may be held that Jesus intended His teachings to be literally obeyed, not

only by His first disciples but by all His followers in subsequent years, and that such literal obedience is practicable, reasonable and conducive to the highest well-being of society. Secondly, it has been said that Jesus was a gentle and honest visionary, who erroneously believed that the possession of riches rendered religious progress impossible, but that strict compliance with His commands would be destructive of civilization. Laveleye declares that "if Christianity were taught and understood conformably to the spirit of its Founder, the existing social organism could not last a day." Thirdly, neither of these views seems to do justice to the spirit of Christ, for they fail to give proper recognition to many other injunctions of the Master and to many significant incidents in his public ministry. Exhaustive treatment of this subject is, of course, impossible here. Briefly it may be remarked, that Jesus looked upon wealth as tending oftentimes to foster an unsocial spirit. Rich men are liable to become enemies of the brotherhood Jesus sought to establish, by reason of their covetousness and contracted sympathies. The rich man is in danger of erecting false standards of manhood, of ignoring the highest

interests of the soul by an undue emphasis on the material. Wealth, in itself, is not an evil, but it is only a good when it is used to advance the real welfare of humanity. Jesus was not intent upon teaching economics. His purpose was to develop the man. It was the moral value and spiritual influence of material things that concerned him. Professor Shailer Mathews admirably states the true attitude of Jesus towards rich men: "Jesus was a friend neither of the working man nor the rich man as such. He calls the poor man to sacrifice as well as the rich man. He was the Son of Man, not the son of a class of men. But His denunciation is unsparing of those men who make wealth at the expense of souls; who find in capital no incentive to further fraternity; who endeavor so to use wealth as to make themselves independent of social obligations, and to grow fat with that which should be shared with society;—for those men who are gaining the world but are letting their neighbors fall among thieves and Lazarus rot among their dogs."

Jesus was therefore not a foe to rich men as such, but to that antisocial, abnormal regard for wealth and its procurements, which leads to the creation

of class distinctions and impedes the full and free development of our common humanity along the lines of brotherly love and coöperation. A Christian may consistently be a rich man, provided he uses his wealth in furthering the true interests of society, and realizes, as respects his own person, that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." The error of monasticism consists in making poverty a virtue and an essential condition of the highest holiness. It is true that some callings preclude the prospect of fortune. The average clergyman cannot hope to amass wealth. The resident of a social settlement may possess capacities that would win success in business, but he must forego financial prospects if he expects to live and labor among the poor. In so far as the monks deliberately turned their backs on the material rewards of human endeavors that they might be free to devote themselves to the service of humanity, their vow of poverty was creditable and reasonable. But they erred when they exalted poverty as of itself commending them in a peculiar degree to the mercy of God.

2. The Vow of Celibacy. "The moral merit

of celibacy," says Allen, "was harder to make out of the Scripture, doubtless, since family life is both at the foundation of civil society and the source of all the common virtues." The monks held that Christ and Paul both taught and practiced celibacy. In the early and middle ages celibacy was looked upon by all churchmen as in itself a virtue. The prevailing modern idea is that marriage is a holy institution, in no sense inferior in sacredness to any ecclesiastical order of life. He who antagonizes it plays into the hands of the foes to social purity and individual virtue.

The ideas of Jerome, Ambrose, and all the early Fathers, respecting marriage, are still held by many ecclesiastics. One of them, in defending the celibacy of existing religious orders, says: "Celibacy is enjoined on these religious orders as a means to greater sanctification, greater usefulness, greater absorption in things spiritual, and to facilitate readier withdrawal from things earthly." He gives two reasons for the celibacy of the priesthood, which are all the more interesting because they substantially represent the opinions held by the Christian monks in all ages: First, "That the service of the priest

to God may be undivided and unrestrained." In support of this, he quotes I. Cor., 7 : 32, 33, which reads: "But I would have you free from cares. He that is unmarried is careful for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married is careful for the things of the world, how he may please his wife." And secondly, "Celibacy," according to Trent, "is more blessed than marriage." He also quotes the words of Christ that there are "eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake." He then adds: "It is desirable that those called to the ministry of the altar espouse a life of continence because holier and more angelic."

It is generally admitted that the vow of celibacy was not demanded of the clergy in primitive Christian times. It was only after many years of bitter debate and in response to the growing influence of the monastic ideal, that celibacy finally came to be looked upon as the highest form of Christian virtue, and was enforced upon the clergy. As in the case of the vow of poverty, there certainly can be no reasonable objection to the individual adoption of celibacy, if one is either disinclined to marriage or feels that he can do better work unmarried. But

neither Scripture nor reason justifies the imposition of celibacy upon any man, nor the view that a life of continence is holier than marriage. It may be reverently said that God would be making an unreasonable demand upon mankind, if the holiness He requires conflicted with the proper satisfaction of those impulses He himself has deeply implanted in human nature.

3. The Vow of Obedience. The monks were required to render absolute obedience to the will of their superiors, as the representatives of God. Dom Guigo, in his rules for the Carthusian Order, declares: "Moreover, if the Prior commands one of his religious to take more food, or to sleep for a longer time, in fact, whatever command may be given us by our Superior, we are not allowed to disobey, lest we should disobey God also, who commands us by the mouth of our Superior. All our practices of mortification and devotion would be fruitless and of no value, without this one virtue of obedience, which alone can make them acceptable to God."

Thus a strict and uncomplaining obedience, not to the laws of God as interpreted by the individual

conscience, but to the judgment and will of a brother man, was demanded of the monks.

> "Theirs not to reason why,
> Theirs not to make reply,
> Theirs but to do and die."

They were often severely beaten or imprisoned and sometimes mutilated for acts of disobedience. While the monks, especially the Friars and Jesuits, carried this principle of obedience to great extremes, yet in the barbarous ages its enforcement was sadly needed. Law and order were words which the untamed Goth could not comprehend. He had to be taught habits of obedience, a respect for the rights of others, and a proper appreciation of his duty to society for the common good. But while, at the beginning, the monastic vow of obedience helped to inculcate these desirable lessons, and vastly modified the ferocity of unchecked individualism, it tended, in the course of time, to generate a servile humility fatal to the largest and freest personal development. In the interests of passive obedience, it suppressed freedom of thought and action. Obedience became mechanical and unreasoning. The consequence was that the passion for individual

liberty was unduly restrained, and the extravagant claims of political and ecclesiastical tyrants were greatly strengthened.

Such was the monastic ideal and such were some of the means employed to realize it. The ascetic spirit manifests itself in a great variety of ways, but all these visible and changing externals have one common source. "To cherish the religious principle," says William E. Channing, "some have warred against their social affections, and have led solitary lives; some against their senses, and have abjured all pleasure in asceticism; some against reason, and have superstitiously feared to think; some against imagination, and have foolishly dreaded to read poetry or books of fiction; some against the political and patriotic principles, and have shrunk from public affairs,—all apprehending that if they were to give free range to their natural emotions their religious life would be chilled or extinguished."

IX

THE EFFECTS OF MONASTICISM

"WE READ HISTORY," said Wendell Phillips, "not through our eyes but through our prejudices." Yet if it were possible entirely to lay aside one's prepossessions respecting monastic history, it would still be no easy task to estimate the influences of the monks upon human life.

In every field of thought and activity monasticism wrought good and evil. Education, industry, government and religion have been both furthered and hindered by the monks. What Francis Parkman said of the Roman Catholic Church is true of the monastic institution: "Clearly she is of earth, not of heaven; and her transcendently dramatic life is a type of the good and ill, the baseness and nobleness, the foulness and purity, the love and hate, the pride, passion, truth, falsehood, fierceness, and

tenderness, that battle in the restless heart of man."

A careful and sympathetic survey of monastic history compels the conclusion that monasticism, while not uniformly a blessing to the world, was not an unmitigated evil. The system presents one long series of perplexities and contradictions. One historian shuts his eyes to its pernicious effects, or at least pardons its transgressions, on the ground that perfection in man or in institutions is unattainable. Another condemns the whole system, believing that the sum of its evils far outweighs whatever benefits it may have conferred upon mankind. Schaff cuts the Gordian knot, maintaining that the contradiction is easily solved on the theory that it was not monasticism, as such, which has proved a blessing to the Church and the world. "It was Christianity in monasticism," he says, "which has done all the good, and used this abnormal mode of life as a means of carrying forward its mission of love and peace."

To illustrate the diversities of opinion on this subject, and incidentally to show how difficult it is to present a well-balanced, symmetrically fair and just estimate of the monastic institution as a whole,

contrast the opinions of four celebrated men. Pius IX. refers to the monks as "those chosen phalanxes of the army of Christ which have always been the bulwark and ornament of the Christian republic as well as of civil society." But then he was the Pope of Rome, the Arch-prelate of the Church. "Monk," fiercely demands Voltaire, "Monk, what is that profession of thine? It is that of having none, of engaging one's self by an inviolable oath to be a fool and a slave, and to live at the expense of others." But he was the philosophical skeptic of Paris. "Where is the town," cries Montalembert, "which has not been founded or enriched or protected by some religious community? Where is the church which owes not to them a patron, a relic, a pious and popular tradition? Wherever there is a luxuriant forest, a pure stream, a majestic hill, we may be sure that religion has left there her stamp by the hand of the monk." But this was Montalembert, the Roman Catholic historian, and the avowed champion of the monks. "A cruel, unfeeling temper," writes Gibbon, "has distinguished the monks of every age and country; their stern indifference, which is seldom mollified by per-

sonal friendship, is inflamed by religious hatred; and their merciless zeal has strenuously administered the holy office of the Inquisition." But this was Gibbon, the hater of everything monastic. Between these extreme views lies a wide field upon which many a deathless duel has been fought by the writers of monastic history.

The variety of judgments respecting the nature and effects of monasticism is partly due to the diversity in the facts of its history. Monasticism was the friend and the foe of true religion. It was the inspiration of virtue and the encouragement of vice. It was the patron of industry and the promoter of idleness. It was a pioneer in education and the teacher of superstition. It was the disburser of alms and a many-handed robber. It was the friend of human liberty and the abettor of tyranny. It was the champion of the common people and the defender of class privileges. It was, in short, everything that man was and is, so varied were its operations, so complex was its influence, so comprehensive was its life.

Of some things we may be certain. Any religious institution or ideal of life that has survived the

changes of twelve centuries, and that has enlisted the enthusiastic services and warmest sympathies of numerous men and women who have been honorably distinguished for their intellectual attainments and moral character, must have possessed elements of truth and moral worth. A contemptuous treatment of monasticism implies either an ignorance of its real history or a wilful disregard of the deep significance of its commendable features.

It is also certain that while the methods of monasticism, judged by their effects upon the individual and upon society, may be justly censured, it is beyond question that many monks, groping their way toward the light in an age of ignorance and superstition, were inspired by the purest motives. "Conscience," observes Waddington, "however misguided, cannot be despised by a reflecting mind. When it leads one to self-sacrifice and moral fortitude we cannot but admire his spirit, while we condemn his sagacity and method."

The Effects of Self-Sacrifice Upon the Individual

Christianity requires some sort of self-denial as the condition of true Christian discipleship. Self-

love is to yield to a love of others. In some sense, the Christian is to become dead to the world and its demoralizing pleasures. But this primal demand upon the soul needs to be interpreted. What is it to love the world? What is it to keep the body in subjection? What are harmful indulgences? To give wrong answers to these questions is to set up a false ideal; the more strenuously such false ideal is followed, the more disastrous are the consequences. One's struggle for moral purity may end in failure, and one's efficiency for good may be seriously impaired by a perversion of the principle of self-abnegation. Unnatural severity and excessive abstinence often produce the opposite effect from that intended. Instead of a peaceful mind there is delirium, and instead of freedom from temptation there are a thousand horrible fiends hovering in the air and ready, at any moment, to pounce upon their prey. "The history of ascetics," says Martensen, "teaches us that by such overdone fasting the fancy is often excited to an amazing degree, and in its airy domain affords the very things that one thought to have buried, by means of mortification, a magical resurrection." In attempting to subdue the body,

many necessary requirements of the physical organism were totally ignored. The body rebelled against such unnatural treatment, and the mind, so closely related to it, in its distraction, gave birth to the wildest fancies. Men, who would have possessed an ordinarily pure mind in some useful occupation of life, became the prey of the most lewd and obnoxious imaginations. Then they fancied themselves vile above their fellows, and laid on more stripes, put more thorns upon their pillows, and fasted more hours, only to find that instead of fleeing, the devils became blacker and more numerous.

Self-forgetfulness is the key to happiness. The monk thought otherwise, and slew himself in his vain attempt to fight against nature. He never lifted his eyes from his own soul. He was always feeling his spiritual pulse, staring at his lean spiritual visage, and tearfully watching his growth in grace. An interest in others and a strong mind in a strong body are the best antidotes to religious despair and the temptations of the soul. Life in the monastery was generally less severe than in the desert's solitude. There was more and better food, shelter, and comfort, but there were many unnecessary and unnatural

restrictions, even in the best days of monasticism. There were too many hours of prayer, too many needless regulations for silence, fasting and penance, to produce a healthy, vigorous type of religious life.

The Effects of Solitude Upon the Individual.

It has already been shown that some solitude is essential to our richest culture. Our higher nature demands time for reflection and meditation. But the monks carried this principle to an extreme, and they overestimated its benefits. "Ambition, avarice, irresolution, fear, and inordinate desires," says Montaigne, "do not leave us because we forsake our native country, they often follow us even to cloisters and philosophical schools; nor deserts, nor caves, nor hair shirts, nor fasts, can disengage us from them."

Besides these passions, which the monks carried with them, their solitary life tended to foster spiritual pride, contract sympathy, and engender an inhumane spirit. True, there were exceptions; but the sublime characters which survive in monastic history are by no means typical of its usual

effects. Seclusion did not benefit the average monk. Indeed there is something wanting in even the loftiest monastic characters. "The heroes of monasticism," says Allen, "are not the heroes of modern life. All put together, they would not furnish out one such soul as William of Orange, or Gustavus, or Milton. Independence of thought and liberty of conscience, they renounced once for all, in taking upon them the monastic vow. All the larger enterprises, all the broad humanities, which to our mind make a greater career, were rigidly shut off by a barrier that could not be crossed. All the warmth and wealth of social and domestic life was a field of forbidden fruit, to be entered only through the gate of unpardonable sin."

Thus self-excluded from a normal life in society, often the subject of self-inflicted pain, it is no wonder that the monk impaired all the nobler and manlier feelings of the soul, that he became strangely indifferent to human affection, that bigotry and pride often sat as joint rulers on the throne of his heart. He who had trampled on all filial relations would scarcely recognize the bonds of human brotherhood. He who heard not the prayer of his own mother

would not be likely to listen to the cry of the tortured heretic for mercy. Man as man was not reverenced. It was the monk in man who was esteemed. As Milman puts it, "Bigotry has always found its readiest and sternest executioners among those who have never known the charities of life."

Nor is it a matter of surprise that the monk was spiritually proud. He was supposed to stand in the inner circle, a little nearer the throne of God than his fellow-mortals. When dead, he was worshiped as a saint and regarded as an intercessor between God and his lower fellow-creatures. His hatred of the base world easily passed over into a sense of superiority and ignoble pride.

"True social life," says Martensen, "leads to solitude." This truth the monks emphasized to the exclusion of the converse, "true life in solitude leads back to society." John Tauler, the mystic monk, realized this truth when he said: "If God calls me to a sick person, or to the service of preaching, or to any other service of love, I must follow, although I am in the state of highest contemplation." The hermits of the desert, and too often the monks of the cloister, escaped from all such services,

ilar character that might be quoted illustrate the hardening influence of solitude. Instead of cherishing a love of kindred, as a gift of heaven and a spring of virtue, the monk spurned it and trampled it beneath his feet as an obstacle to his spiritual progress. "The monks," says Milman, "seem almost unconscious of the softening, humanizing effect of the natural affections, the beauty of parental tenderness and filial love."

The Monks as Missionaries

The conversion of the barbarians was an indispensable condition of modern civilization. Every step forward had to be taken in the face of barbaric ignorance and cruelty. In this stupendous undertaking the monks led the way, displaying in their labors remarkable generalship and undaunted courage. Whatever may be thought of later monasticism, the Benedictine monks are entitled to the lasting gratitude of mankind for their splendid services in reducing barbaric Europe to some sort of order and civilization. But again the mixture of good and evil is strangely illustrated. It seems

impossible to accord the monks unqualified praise. The potency of the evil tendencies within their system vitiated every noble achievement. Their methods and practical ideals were so at variance with the true order of nature that every commendable victory involved a corresponding obstacle to real social and religious progress. The justice of these observations will be more apparent as this inquiry proceeds.

Monasticism and Civic Duties

The withdrawal of a considerable number of men of character and talent from the exercise of civic duties is injurious to the state. The burdens upon those who remain become heavier, while society is deprived of the moral influence of those who forsake their civic responsibilities. When the monk, from the outside as it were, attempted to exert an influence for good, he largely failed. His ideals of life were not formulated in a real world, but in an artificial, antisocial environment. He was unable to appreciate the political needs of men. He could not enter sympathetically into their serious employments

or innocent delights. Controlled by superstition, and exalting a servile obedience to human authority, he became a very unsafe guide in political affairs. He could not consistently labor for secular progress, because he had forsaken a world in which secular interests were prominent.

It may be true that in the early days of monasticism the monks pursued the proper course in refusing to become Roman patriots. No human power could have averted the ruin which overtook that corrupt world. Perhaps their non-combatant attitude gave them more influence with the conquerors of Rome, who were to become the founders of modern nations.

In later years, the abbots of the principal monasteries occupied seats in the legislative assemblies of Germany, Hungary, Spain, England, Italy, and France. In many instances they stood between the violence of the nobles and the unprotected vassal. Political monks, inspired by a natural breadth of vision and a love of humanity, secured the passage of wise and humane regulations. Palgrave says: "The mitre has resisted many blows which would have broken the helmet, and the crosier has kept

more foes in awe than the lance. It is, then, to these prelates that we chiefly owe the maintenance of the form and spirit of free government, secured to us, not by force, but by law; and the altar has thus been the corner-stone of our ancient constitution."

Although there is much truth in the foregoing observation, yet on the other hand, when the influence of the monastic ideal upon civilization is studied in its deeper aspects, it cannot be justly maintained that the final effects of monasticism minister to the development of a normal civilization. Industrial, mental and moral progress depend upon a certain breadth of mind and energy of soul. Asceticism saps the vitality of human nature and confines the activity of the mind within artificial limits. "Hence the dreary, sterile torpor," says Lecky, "that characterized those ages in which the ascetic principle has been supreme, while the civilizations which have attained the highest perfection have been those of ancient Greece and modern Europe, which were most opposed to it."

The monks did not hesitate to become embroiled in military quarrels, or to incite the fiercer passions of men when it suited their purpose. Their oppo-

sition to kings and princes was often not based on a love of popular freedom, but on an indisposition to share power with secular rulers. The legislative enactments against heretics, many of which they inspired, clearly show that they neither desired nor tolerated liberty of speech or conduct. They were the Almighty's vicars on earth, before whom it was the duty of king and subject to bow down. Vaughan writes of the period just prior to the Reformation: "The great want was freedom from ecclesiastical domination; and from the feeling of the hour, scarcely any price would be deemed too great to be paid for that object." The history of modern Jesuitism, against which the legislation of almost every civilized nation has been directed, affords abundant testimony to the inherent hostility of the monastic system, even in its modified modern form, to every species of government which in any way guarantees freedom of thought to its people. This stern fact confronts the student, however much he may be inclined to yield homage to the early monks. It must be held in mind when one reads this pleasing sentence from Macaulay: "Surely a system which, however deformed by superstition, introduced strong

moral restraints into communities previously governed only by vigor of muscle and by audacity of spirit, a system which taught the fiercest and mightiest ruler that he was, like his meanest bondman, a responsible being, might have seemed to deserve a more respectful mention from philosophers and philanthropists."

The general effect of monasticism on the state is, therefore, not to be determined by fixing the gaze on any one century of its history, or by holding up some humane and patriotic monk as a representative product of the system.

The Agricultural Services of the Monks

Europe must ever be indebted to Benedict and his immediate followers for their services in reclaiming waste lands, and in removing the stigma which a corrupt civilization had placed upon labor. Benedict came before the world saying: "No person is ever more usefully employed than when working with his hands or following the plough, providing food for the use of man." Care was taken that councils should not be called when ploughing was to be done

or wheat to be threshed. Benedict bent himself to the task of teaching the rich and the proud, the poor and the lazy the alphabet of prosperity and happiness. Agriculture was at its lowest ebb. Marshes covered once fertile fields, and the men who should have tilled the land spurned the plough as degrading, or were too indolent to undertake the tasks of the farm. The monks left their cells and their prayers to dig ditches and plough fields. The effect was magical. Men once more turned back to a noble but despised industry. Peace and plenty supplanted war and poverty. "The Benedictines," says Guizot, "have been the great clearers of land in Europe. A colony, a little swarm of monks, settled in places nearly uncultivated, often in the midst of a pagan population—in Germany, for example, or in Brittany; there, at once missionaries and laborers, they accomplish their double service, through peril and fatigue."

It is to be regretted that history throws a shadow across this pleasing scene. When labor came to be recognized as honorable and useful, along came the begging friars, creating, both by precept and example, a prejudice against labor and wealth. Rags and lazi-

ness came to be associated with holiness, and a beggar monk was held up as an ideal and sacred personage. "The spirit that makes men devote themselves in vast numbers," says Lecky, "to a monotonous life of asceticism and poverty is so essentially opposed to the spirit that creates the energy and enthusiasm of industry, that their continued coëxistence may be regarded as impossible." But such a fatal mistake could not long captivate the mind, or cause men to forget Benedict and his industrial ideal. The blessings of wealth rightly administered, and the dignity of labor without which wealth is impossible, came to be recognized as necessary factors in the true progress of man.

The Monks and Secular Learning

For many centuries, as has been previously shown, the monks were the schoolmasters of Europe. They also preserved the manuscripts of the classics, produced numerous theological works, transmitted many pious traditions, and wrote some interesting and some worthless chronicles. They laid the foundations of several great universities, including those

of Paris, Oxford and Cambridge. For these, and other valuable services, the monks merit the praise of posterity. It is, however, too much to affirm, as Montalembert does, that "without the monks, we should have been as ignorant of our history as children." It is altogether improbable that the human mind would have been unproductive in the field of historical writing had monasticism not existed during the middle ages. While, also, the monks should be thanked for preserving the classics, it should not be supposed that all knowledge of Latin and Greek literature would have perished but for them.

It is surprising that the literary men of the medieval period should have written so little of interest to the modern mind, or that helps us to an understanding of the momentous events amid which they lived. Unfortunately the monkish mind was concentrated upon a theology, the premises of which have been largely set aside by modern science. Their writings are so permeated by grotesque superstitions that they are practically worthless to-day. Their hostility to secular affairs blinded them to the tremendous significance of the mighty political and social movements of the age.

It is undeniable that the monks never encouraged a love of secular learning. They did not try to impart a love of the classics which they preserved. The spirit of monasticism was ever at war with true intellectual progress. The monks imprisoned Roger Bacon fourteen years, and tried to blast his fair name by calling him a magician, merely because he stepped beyond the narrow limits of monkish inquiry. Many suffered indignities, privations or death for questioning tradition or for conducting scientific researches.

So while it is true that the monks rendered many services to the cause of education, it is also true that their monastic theories tended to narrow the scope of intellectual activity. "This," says Guizot, "is the foundation of their instruction; all was turned into commentary of the Scriptures, historical, philosophical, allegorical, moral commentary. They desired only to form priests; all studies, whatsoever their nature, were directed to this result." There was no disinterested love of learning; no desire to become acquainted with God's world. In fact, the old hostility to everything natural characterizes all monastic history. Europe did not enter upon that broad and noble intellectual development

which is the glory of our era, until the right arm of monasticism was struck down, the dread of heresy banished from the human mind, and secular learning welcomed as a legitimate and elevated field for mental activity.

Hamilton W. Mabie, in his delightful essay on "Some Old Scholars," describes this step from the gloom of the cloister to the light of God's world: "Petrarch really escaped from a sepulcher when he stepped out of the cloister of medievalism, with its crucifix, its pictures of unhealthy saints, its cords of self-flagellation, and found the heavens clear, beautiful, and well worth living under, and the world full of good things which one might desire and yet not be given over to evil. He ventured to look at life for himself and found it full of wonderful dignity and power. He opened his Virgil, brushed aside the cobwebs which monkish brains had spun over the beautiful lines, and met the old poet as one man meets another; and lo! there arose before him a new, untrodden and wholly human world, free from priestcraft and pedantry, near to nature and unspeakably alluring and satisfying."

The Dominicans and Jesuits set their faces like

flint against all education tending to liberalize the mind. Here is a passage from a document published by the Jesuits at their first centenary: "It is undeniable that we have undertaken a great and uninterrupted war in the interests of the Catholic church against heresy. Heresy need never hope that the society will make terms with it, or remain quiescent. . . . No peace need be expected, for the seed of hatred is born within us. What Hamilcar was to Hannibal, Ignatius is to us. At his instigation, we have sworn upon the altars eternal war." When this proclamation is read in the light of history, its meaning stands forth with startling clearness. Almost every truth in science and philosophy, no matter how valuable it was destined to become as an agent in enhancing the well-being of the race, has had to wear the stigma of heresy.

It is an interesting speculation to imagine what the intellectual development of Europe would have been, had secular learning been commended by the monks, and the common people encouraged to exercise their minds without fear of excommunication or death. It is sad to reflect how many great thoughts must have perished still-born in the student's cloister

cell, and to picture the silent grief with which many a brilliant soul must have repressed his eager imagination.

The Charity of the Monks

In the eleventh century, a monk named Thieffroy wrote the following: "It matters little that our churches rise to heaven, that the capitals of their pillars are sculptured and gilded, that our parchment is tinted purple, that gold is melted to form the letters of our manuscripts, and that their bindings are set with precious stones, if we have little or no care for the members of Christ, and if Christ himself lies naked and dying before our doors." This spirit, so charmingly expressed, was never quite absent from the monkish orders. The monasteries were asylums for the hungry during famines, and the sick during plagues. They served as hotels where the traveler found a cordial welcome, comfortable shelter and plain food. If he needed medical aid, his wants were supplied. During the black plague, while many monks fled with the multitude, others stayed at their posts and were to be found

daily in the homes of the stricken, ministering to their bodily and spiritual needs. Many of them perished in their heroic and self-sacrificing labors.

Alms-giving was universally enjoined as a sure passport to heaven. The most glittering rewards were held out to those who enriched the monks with legacies to be used in relief of the poor. It was, no doubt, the unselfish activities of the monks that caused them to be held in such high esteem; the result was their coffers were filled with more gold than they could easily give away. Thus abuses grew up. Bernard said: "Piety gave birth to wealth, and the daughter devoured the mother." Jacob of Vitry complained that money, "by various and deceptive tricks," was exacted from the people by the monks, most of which adhered "to their unfaithful fingers." While Lecky eloquently praises the monks for their beautiful deeds of charity, "following all the windings of the poor man's grief," still he condones in the strongest terms the action of Henry VIII. in transferring the monastic funds to his own treasury: "No misapplication of this property by private persons could produce as much evil as an unrestrained monasticism."

It would be unjust, however, to censure the monks for not recognizing the evil social effects of indiscriminate alms-giving. While their system was imperfect, it was the only one possible in an age when the social sciences were unknown. It is difficult, even to-day, to restrain that good-natured, but baneful, benevolence which takes no account of circumstances and consequences, and often fosters the growth of pauperism. The monks kept alive that sweet spirit of philanthropy which is so essential to all the higher forms of civilization. It is easier to discover the proper methods for the exercise of generous sentiments, than to create those feelings or to arouse them when dormant.

Monasticism and Religion

No doctrine in theology, or practice of religion, has been free from monastic influences. An adequate treatment of this theme would require volumes instead of paragraphs. A few points, however, may be touched upon by way of suggestion to those who may wish to pursue the subject further.

The effect of the monastic ideal was to emphasize

the sinfulness of man and his need of redemption. To get rid of sin—that is the problem of humanity. A quaint formula of monastic confession reads: "I confess all the sins of my body, of my flesh, of my bones and sinews, of my veins and cartilages, of my tongue and lips, of my ears, teeth and hair, of my marrow and any other part whatsoever, whether it be soft or hard, wet or dry." This emphasis on man's sinfulness and the need of redemption was sadly needed in Rome and all down the ages. "It was a protest," says Clarke, "against pleasure as the end of life. . . . It proved the reality of the religious sentiment to a skeptical age. . . . If this long period of self-torture has left us no other gain, let us value it as a proof that in man religious aspiration is innate, unconquerable, and able to triumph over all that the world hopes and over all that it fears."

Thus the monks helped to keep alive the enthusiasm of religion. There was a fervor, a devotion, a spirit of sacrifice, in the system, which acted as a corrective to the selfish materialism of the early and middle ages. Christian history furnishes many sad spectacles of brutality and licentiousness, of insolent

pride and uncontrolled greed, masked in the garb of religion. Monasticism, by its constant insistence upon poverty and obedience, fostered a spirit of loyalty to Christ and the cross, which served as a protest, not only against the general laxity of morals, but also against the faithlessness of corrupt monks. Harnack says: "It was always monasticism that rescued the church when sinking, freed her when secularized, defended her when attacked. It warmed hearts that were growing cold, restrained unruly spirits, won back the people when alienated from the church." It may have been in harmony with divine plans, that religion was to have been kept alive and vigorous by excessive austerities, even as in later days it needed the stern and unyielding Puritan spirit, now regarded as too grim and severe, to cope successfully with the forces of tyranny and sin.

If it be true, as some are inclined to believe, that this age is losing a definite consciousness of sin, that in the reaction from the asceticism of the monks and the gloom of the Puritans we are in danger of minimizing the doctrine of personal accountability to God, then we cannot afford to ignore the underlying ideal of monasticism. In so far as monasticism contributed

to a normal consciousness of human freedom and personal guilt, and maintained a grip upon the conscience of the sinner, it has rendered the cause of true religion a genuine and permanent service.

But the mistake of the monks was twofold. They exaggerated sin, and they employed unhealthy methods to get rid of it. Excessive introspection, instead of exercising a purifying influence, tends to distort one's religious conceptions, and creates an unwholesome type of piety. Man is a sinner, but he also has potential and actual goodness. The monks failed to define sin in accordance with facts. Many innocent pleasures and legitimate satisfactions were erroneously thought to be sinful. Honorable and useful aspirations that, under wise control, minister to man's highest development were selected for eradication. "Every instinct of human nature," says W. E. Channing, "has its destined purpose in life, and the perfect man is to be found in the proportionate cultivation of each element of his character, not in the exaggerated development of those faculties which are deemed primarily good, nor in the repression of those which are evil only when their prominence destroys the balance of the whole."

But the methods employed by the monks to get rid of sin afford another illustration of the fact that noble sentiments and holy aspirations need to be wisely directed. It is not enough for a mother to love her child; she must know how to give that love proper expression. In her attempt to guide and train her loved one she may fatally mislead him. The modern emphasis upon method deserves wider recognition than it has received.

The applause of the church that sounded so sweet in the ears of the monk, as he laid the stripes upon his body, proclaims the high esteem in which penance was held. But the monk cruelly deceived himself. His self-inflicted tortures developed within his soul an unnatural piety, "a piety," says White, "that became visionary and introspective, a theology of black clouds and lightning and thunder, a superstitious religion based on dreams and saint's bones." True penitence consists in high and holy purposes, in pure and unselfish living, and not in disfigurements and in misery. Dreariness and fear are not the proper manifestations of that perfect love which casteth out fear.

The influence of monasticism upon the doctrine

of atonement for sin was, in many respects, prejudicial to the best interests of religion. The monks are largely responsible for the theory that sin can be atoned for by pecuniary gifts. It may be said that they did not ignore true feelings of repentance, of which the gold was merely a tangible expression, but the notion widely prevailed that the prayers of the monks, purchased by temporal gifts, secured the forgiveness of the transgressor. The worship of saints, pilgrimages to shrines, and reverence for bones and other relics, were assiduously encouraged.

Thus the monkish conception of salvation and of the means by which it is to be obtained were at variance with any reasonable interpretation of the Scriptures and the dictates of human reason. "It measured virtue," says Schaff, "by the quantity of outward exercises, instead of the quality of the inward disposition, and disseminated self-righteousness and an anxious, legal, and mechanical religion."*

The doctrine of future punishment reached its most repulsive and abnormal developments in the hands of the monks. A vast literature was produced by them, portraying, with vivid minuteness,

* Appendix, Note K.

the pangs of hell. Volcanoes were said to be the portals of the lower world, that heaved and sighed as human souls were plunged into the awful depths. God was held up as a fearful judge, and the saving mercy of Christ himself paled before the rescuing power of his mother. These fearful caricatures of God, these detailed, revolting descriptions of pain and anguish, could not but have a hardening effect upon the minds of men. "To those," says Lecky, "who do not regard these teachings as true, it must appear without exception, the most odious in the religious history of the world, subversive of the very foundations of Christianity."

Finally, the greatest error of monastic teaching was in its false and baneful distinction between the secular and the religious. Unquestionably the Christian ideal is founded on some form of world-renunciation. The teachings and example of Jesus, the lives of the Apostles, and the characters of the early Christians, exhibit in varying phases the ideal of self-crucifixion. The doctrine of the cross, with all that it signifies, is the most powerful force in the spread of Christianity. The spiritual nature of man needs to be trained and disciplined. But does

this truth lead the Christian to the monastic method? Was the self-renunciation of Jesus like that of the ascetics, with their ecstasies and self-punishments? Is God more pleased with the recluse who turns from a needy world to shut himself up to prayer and meditation, than He is with him who cultivates holy emotions and heavenly aspirations, while pursuing some honorable and useful calling? The answer to these questions discloses the chief fallacy in the monastic ideal, the effect of which was the creation of an artificial piety. There is no special virtue in silence, celibacy, and abstinence from the enjoyment of God's gifts to mankind.

The crying need of Christianity to-day is a willingness on the part of Christ's followers to live for others instead of self. Men and women are needed who, like many of the monks and nuns, will identify themselves with the toiling multitudes, and who will forego the pleasures of the world and the prospects of material gain or social preferment, for the sake of ministering to a needy humanity. The essence of Christianity is a love to God and man that expresses itself in terms of social service and self-sacrifice. Monasticism helped to preserve that noble

essence of all true religion. But a revival of the apostolic spirit in these times would not mean a triumph for monasticism. Stripped of its rigid vows of celibacy, poverty and obedience, monasticism is dead.

The spirit of social service, the insistence upon soul-purity, and the craving for participation in the divine nature, are the fruits of Christianity, not of monasticism, which merely sought to carry out the Christian ideal. But it is not necessary, in order to realize this ideal, to wage war on human nature. True Christianity is perfectly compatible with wealth, health and social joys. The realms of industry, politics and home-life are a part of God's world. A religious ideal based on a distorted view of social life, that involves a renunciation of human joy and the extinction of natural desires, and that prohibits the free exercise of beneficent faculties, as conditions of its realization, can never establish its right to permanent and universal dominion. The faithful discharge of unromantic, secular duties, the keeping of one's heart pure in the midst of temptation, and the unheralded altruism of private life, must ever be as welcome in the sight of God as the prayers of

the recluse, who scorns the world of secular affairs.

True religion, the highest religion, is possible beyond the walls of churches and convents. The so-called secular employments of business and politics, of home and school, may be conducted in a spirit of lofty consecration to the Eternal, and so carried on, may, in their way, minister to the highest welfare of humanity. The old distinction, therefore, between the secular and the sacred is pernicious and false. There are some other sacred things besides monasteries and prayers. Human life itself is holy; so are the commonplace duties of the untitled household and factory saints.

> "God is in all that liberates and lifts,
> In all that humbles, sweetens, and consoles."

Modern monasticism has forsaken the column of St. Simeon Stylites and the rags of St. Francis. It has given up the ancient and fantastic feats of asceticism, and the spiritual extravagances of the early monks. The old monasticism never could have arisen under a religious system controlled by natural and healthful spiritual ideas. It has no attractions for minds unclouded by superstition. It has lost

its hold upon the modern man because the ancient ideas of God and his world, upon which it thrived, have passed away.

Such are some of the effects of the monastic institution. Its history is at once a warning and an inspiration. Its dreamy asceticism, its gloomy cells, are gone. Its unworldly motives, its stern allegiance to duty, its protest against self-indulgence, its courage and sincerity, will ever constitute the potent energy of true religion. Its ministrations to the broken-hearted, and its loving care of the poor, must ever remain as a shining example of practical Christianity. In the simplicity of the monk's life, in the idea of "brotherhood," in the common life for common ends, a Christian democracy will always find food for reflection. As the social experiments of modern times reveal the hidden laws of social and religious progress, it will be found that in spite of its glaring deficiencies, monasticism was a magnificent attempt to realize the ideal of Christ in individual and social life. As such it merits neither ridicule nor obloquy. It was a heroic struggle with inveterate ignorance and sin, the

history of which flashes many a welcome light upon the problems of modern democracy and religion.

Monastic forms and vows may pass away with other systems that will have their day, but its fervor of faith, and its warfare against human passion and human greed, its child-like love of the heavenly kingdom will never die. The revolt against its superstitions and excesses is justifiable only in a society that seeks to actualize its underlying religious ideal of personal purity and social service.

APPENDIX

NOTE A

The derivation and meaning of a few monastic terms may be of interest to the reader.

Abbot, from ἀββᾶ, literally, father. A title originally given to any monk, but afterwards restricted to the head or superior of a monastery.

Anchoret, anchorite, from the Greek, ἀναχωρητής, a recluse, literally, one retired. In the classification of religious ascetics, the anchorets were those who were most excessive in their austerities, not only choosing solitude but subjecting themselves to the greatest privations.

Ascetic, ἀσκητής, one who exercises, an athlete. The term was first applied to those practicing self-denial for athletic purposes. In its ecclesiastical sense, it denotes those who seek holiness through self-mortification.

Canon Regular. About A. D. 755, Chrodegangus, Bishop of Metz, gave a cloister-life law to his clergy, who came to be called canons, from κανών, rule. The canons were originally priests living in a community like monks, and acting as assistants to the bishops. They gradually formed separate and independent bodies. Benedict XII. (1399) tried to secure a general adoption of the rule of Augustine for these canons, which gave rise to the distinction between canons regular (i. e., those who follow that rule), and canons secular (those who do not).

Cenobite, from the Greek, κοινός, common, and βίος, life; applied to those living in monasteries.

Clerks Regular. This is a title given to certain religious orders founded in the sixteenth century. The principal societies are: the Theatines, founded by Cajetan of Thiene, subsequently Pope Paul

IV.; and Priests of the Oratory, instituted by Philip Neri, of Florence. These two orders have been held in high repute, numbering among their members many men of rank and intellect.

Cloister, from the Latin, *Claustra*, that which closes or shuts, an inclosure; hence, a place of religious retirement, a monastery.

Hermit, or eremite, from the Greek, ἐρῆμος, desolate, solitary. One who dwells alone apart from society, or with but few companions. Not used of those who dwell in cloisters.

Monastery, comes from the same source as monk. Commonly applied to a house used exclusively by monks. The term, however, strictly includes the abbey, the priory, the nunnery, the friary, and in this broad sense is synonymous with convent, which is from the Latin, *convenire*, to meet together.

Monk, from the Greek, μόνος, alone, single. Originally, a man who retired from the world for religious meditation. In later use, a member of a community. It is used indiscriminately to denote all persons in monastic orders, in or out of the monasteries.

Nun, from *nouna*, i. e., chaste, holy. "The word is probably of Coptic origin, and occurs as early as in Jerome." (Schaff).

Regulars. Until the tenth century it was not customary to regard the monks as a part of the clerical order. Before that time they were known as *religiosi* or *regulares*. Afterwards a distinction was made between parish priests, or secular clergy, and the monks, or regular clergy.

For more detailed information on these and other monastic words, see The Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia, and McClintock and Strong's Encyclopedia.

NOTE B

The Pythagoreans are likened to the Jesuits probably on account of their submission to Pythagoras as Master, their love of learning and their austerities. Like the Jesuits, the Pythagorean league entangled itself with politics and became the object of hatred and violence. Its

meeting-houses were everywhere sacked and burned. As a philosophical school Pythagoreanism became extinct about the middle of the fourth century.

NOTE C

The Encyclopædia Brittanica divides the monastic institutions into five classes:

1. Monks. 2. Canons Regular. 3. Military Orders. 4. Friars. 5. Clerks Regular. All of these have communities of women, either actually affiliated to them, or formed on similar lines.

Saint Benedict distinguishes four sorts of monks: 1. Cœnobites, living under an abbot in a monastery. 2. Anchorites, who retire into the desert. 3. Sarabaites, dwelling two or three in the same cell. 4. Gyrovagi, who wander from monastery to monastery. The last two kinds he condemns. The Gyrovagi or wandering monks were the pest of convents and the disgrace of monasticism. They evaded all responsibilities and spent their time tramping from place to place, living like parasites, and spreading vice and disorder wherever they went.

There were really four distinct stages in the development of the monastic institution:

1. Asceticism. Clergy and laymen practiced various forms of self-denial without becoming actual monks.

2. The hermit life, which was asceticism pushed to an external separation from the world. Here are to be found anchorites, and stylites or pillar-saints.

3. Cœnobitism, or monastic life proper, consisting of associations of monks under one roof, and ruled by an abbot.

4. Monastic orders, or unions of cloisters, the various abbots being under the authority of one supreme head, who was, at first, generally the founder of the brotherhood.

Under this last division are to be classed the Mendicant Friars, the Military Monks, the Jesuits and other modern organizations. The members of these orders commenced their monastic life in monasteries, and were therefore cœnobites, but many of them passed out of the

cloister to become teachers, preachers or missionary workers in various fields.

NOTE D

Matins. One of the canonical hours appointed in the early church, and still observed in the Roman Catholic Church, especially in monastic orders. It properly begins at midnight. The name is also applied to the service itself, which includes the Lord's Prayer, the Angelic Salutation, the Creed and several psalms.

Lauds, a religious service in connection with matins; so called from the reiterated ascriptions of praise to God in the psalms.

Prime. The first hour or period of the day; follows after matins and lauds; originally intended to be said at the first hour after sunrise.

Tierce, terce. The third hour; half-way between sunrise and noon.

Sext. The sixth hour, originally and properly said at midday.

None, noon. The ninth hour from sunrise, or the middle hour between midday and sunset—that is, about 3 o'clock.

Vespers, the next to the last of the canonical hours—the even-song.

Compline. The last of the seven canonical hours, originally said after the evening meal and before retiring to sleep, but in later medieval and modern usage following immediately on vespers.

B. V. M.—Blessed Virgin Mary.

NOTE E

The literary and educational services of the monks are described in many histories, but the reader will find the best treatment of this subject in the scholarly yet popular work of George Haven Putnam, "Books and Their Makers During the Middle Ages," to which we are largely indebted for the facts given in this volume.

NOTE F

In many interesting particulars St. Francis may be compared with General Booth of the Salvation Army. In their intense religious fervor, in their insistence upon obedience, humility, and self-denial, in

their services for the welfare of the poor, in their love of the "submerged tenth," they are alike. True, there are no monkish vows in the Salvation Army and its doctrines bear a general resemblance to those of other Protestant communions, but like the old Franciscan order, it is dominated by a powerful missionary spirit, and its members are actuated by an unsurpassed devotion to the common people. In the autocratic, military features of the Army, it more nearly approaches the ideal of Loyola. It is quite possible that the differences between Francis and Booth are due more to the altered historical environment than to any radical diversities in the characters of the two men.

NOTE G

The quotations from Father Sherman are taken from an address delivered by him in Central Music Hall, Chicago, Illinois, on Monday, February 5, 1894, in which he extolled the virtues of Loyola and defended the aims and character of the Society of Jesus.

NOTE H

Those who may wish to study the casuistry of the Jesuits, as it appears in their own works, are referred to two of the most important and comparatively late authorities: Liguori's "*Theologia Moralis*," and Gury's "*Compendium Theologiæ Moralis*" and "*Casus Conscientiæ.*" Gury was Professor of Moral Theology in the College Romain, the Jesuits' College in Rome. His works have passed through several editions. They were translated from the Latin into French by Paul Bert, member of the Chamber of Deputies. An English translation of the French rendering was published by B. F. Bradbury, of Boston, Massachusetts. The reader is also referred to Pascal's "Provincial Letters" and to Migne's "*Dictionnaire de cas de Conscience.*"

NOTE I

The student may profitably study the life and teachings of Wyclif in their bearing upon the destruction of the monasteries. Wyclif was

designated as the "Gospel Doctor" because he maintained that "the law of Jesus Christ infinitely exceeds all other laws." He held to the right of private judgment in the interpretation of Scripture, and denied the infallibility claimed by the pontiffs. He opposed pilgrimages, held loosely to image-worship and rejected the system of tithing as it was then carried on. Wyclif was also a persistent and public foe of the mendicant friars. The views of this eminent reformer were courageously advocated by his followers, and for nearly two generations they continued to agitate the English people. It is easy to understand, therefore, how Wyclif's opinions assisted in preparing the nation for the Reformation of the sixteenth century, although it seemed that Lollardy had been everywhere crushed by persecution. The Lollards condemned, among other things, pilgrimages to the tombs of the saints, papal authority and the mass. Their revolt against Rome led in some instances to grave excesses.

NOTE J

In France, the religious houses suppressed by the laws of February 13, 1790, and August 18, 1792, amounted (without reckoning various minor establishments) to 820 abbeys of men and 255 of women, with aggregate revenues of 95,000,000 livres.

The Thirty Years' War in Germany wrought much mischief to the monasteries. On the death of Maria Theresa, in 1780, Joseph II., her son, dissolved the Mendicant Orders and suppressed the greater number of monasteries and convents in his dominions.

Although Pope Alexander VII. secured the suppression of many small cloisters in Italy, he was in favor of a still wider abolition on account of the superfluity of religious institutes, and the general degeneration of the monks. Various minor suppressions had taken place in Italy, but it was not until the unification of the kingdom that the religious houses were declared national property. The total number of monasteries suppressed in Italy, down to 1882, was 2,255, involving an enormous displacement of property and dispersion of inmates.

The fall of the religious houses in Spain dates from the law of June 21, 1835, which suppressed nine hundred monasteries at a blow. The remainder were dissolved on October 11th, in the same year.

No European country had so many religious houses in proportion to its population and area as Portugal. In 1834 the number suppressed exceeded 500.

NOTE K

The criticism of Schaff is just in its estimate of the general influence of the monastic ideal, but there were individual monks whose views of sin and salvation were singularly pure and elevating. Saint Hugh, of Lincoln, said to several men of the world who were praising the lives of the Carthusian monks: "Do not imagine that the kingdom of Heaven is only for monks and hermits. When God will judge each one of us, he will not reproach the lost for not having been monks or solitaries, but for not having been true Christians. Now, to be a true Christian, three things are necessary; and if one of these three things is wanting to us, we are Christians only in name, and our sentence will be all the more severe, the more we have made profession of perfection. The three things are: *Charity in the heart, truth on the lips, and purity of life*; if we are wanting in these, we are unworthy of the name of Christian."

THE END

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